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ABSTRACT

This compilation of articles presents the views of policy makers and administrators about community education. Following the introduction by Larry Decker titled "Community Education: The Basic Tenets," the articles are contained in three sections. Section 1 (The Potential of Community Education) contains articles titled as follows: "Tomorrow's School" by William J. Ellena and "Can Community Education Restore the American Dream" by Alton C. Crews. Titles of articles comprising Section 2 (Plans for Integrating Community Education into the Education System) are "Public Schools and the Community: Strengthening Quality Education in the 1970s" by James Hunt," "Public Education in Delaware: Time for a Change" by Pierre DuPont, "Learning for Effective Adulthood" by David Hornbeck, and "West Virginia Plan for Community Education." Section 3 (Insights from Practical Experience) articles are titled "Our Schools as Compared to Those Schools" by J. Frank Yeager, "Education and Community" by Thomas Truitt, "Two Approaches to Community Education" by Michael Woodal, "Community Education in the Suburbs: Does It Serve a Purpose?" by Warren Pace and others, "Cooperation or Conflict" by James Greiner, and "Community Education and the Deaf Community" by William McClure. Finally, "Contrasting Perceptions" by Larry Decker concludes the document. (EM)

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ADMINISTRATORS' AND POLICY MAKERS' VIEWS OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Editors
Larry E. Decker
Virginia A. Decker

May 1977

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Administrators' and Policy Makers' Views of Community Education

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Community Education: The Basic Tenets

by Larry E. Decker
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Have Americans Lost Faith in Education?

A review of the political expressions and perceptions of many Americans reveals a growing distrust and, in some cases, even outward hostility toward public and governmental institutions. There is increasing conflict between individual needs resulting from bureaucratic practices and priorities which limit opportunities for face-to-face communication to resolve problems. For governmental as well as for public and private organizations and agencies, there seems to be a "possessive turf bill of rights" which breeds lack of cooperative action. A feeling of apathy and powerlessness underlies the political perceptions of many persons.

An examination of the economic scene reveals similar kinds of feelings of dissatisfaction and a perception that all is not as it should be. Most Americans possess material comforts that are adequate or even abundant because economic living standards are high. There is, however, a growing feeling that although Americans are producing and owning more, they are enjoying it less. There is concern that without constraining consumption or changing priorities, America's economic wealth may be exhausted.

Packard, in his *Nation of Strangers,* characterizes the American social setting as "A Society of Torn Roots." This phrase depicts the fact that individuals are missing a sense of community. The mobility of the American population in an age of instant, impersonal, one-way communication is a contributing cause to the lack of personal contact and meaningful interaction in a community setting that may become a way of life.

Although many Americans are dissatisfied with political and social institutions, they have not lost their faith in education. Education has played an important role in the lives of Americans; and, historically, when faced with a problem, people have looked to education for a solution. Horton accurately described the traditional American attitude when he said that we expect education:

> . . . to form character, make good citizens, keep family mores pure, elevate morals, establish individual character, civilize barbarians and cure social vice and disease. We apply schooling as a remedy for every social phenomenon which we do not like.[1]

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[1] Myles Horton, "The Community Folk School," *The Community School,* Samuel Everett, ed. (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1938), p. 268.

**Sections used with permission of National Association of Secondary School Principals. NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 59, No. 394, November 1975.*

Many people today perceive educational institutions to be remote and bureaucratic, characteristics which make them unresponsive to society's changing needs. If education is to justify the faith that Americans have placed in it, a new direction must be found and its role must be expanded. New interlocking processes and programs for working with communities are needed. Attention must be focused upon humanizing and personalizing education.

Foundation for Understanding

A basic foundation on which the community education philosophy is built is the mutually interdependent relationship and fundamental linkage between the home, the school, and the community as they interact in phases of human development and community improvement.

The following diagram illustrates the areas of interaction. It depicts that although each has a specific role, the areas of influence overlap. The home's influence does not cease when an individual leaves the home nor does the school's cease when the individual leaves the school grounds. Similarly, the home and the school exist in a community. As people's existence in American society becomes more complex, the amount of interaction between the home, the school, and the community will increase.

Community education is built upon the interrelated processes through which people help themselves and their communities. The philosophy advocates processess and programs to utilize the total community environment and human resources so that the community becomes a dynamic interchange of living-learning experiences for all people. It focuses upon the total population of a community–from infants to senior citizens–and is concerned with activities as diverse as reading, rallies, rat control, and retirement.

Inherent within the philosophy is the belief that each community education program should reflect the needs and desires of a particular community. It should include a process based on citizen involvement and participation which produces essential modifications as times and problems change.

Although there are examples where community colleges, community recreation programs, or other local agencies have initiated the leadership and support structure for community education, implementation is usually facilitated through the public schools. The school becomes the agent of implementation because of its position in the community. Although it is only one of society's many institutions of influence, the school is the primary source of formal education.

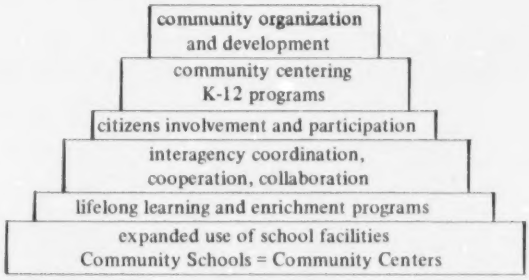
The school is one neighborhood institution that is readily accessible to every man, woman, and child in the neighborhood regardless of class, creed, or color. Furthermore, the physical plant of the school, which represents a huge community investment, is suited for community multi-use centers. Utilization of the school plan eliminates costly duplication of facilities.

When the public school becomes a community school, the development of a community education program is usually achieved by a modification in the school's internal organizational structure. Although activities and programs are often provided in school facilities, they are not limited to the school building itself because the educational process extends itself into the community. Other agencies, programs and activities as well as factories, businesses, and the total surrounding environment become part of a living/learning system that can influence the lives of every member of the community.

The terms "community education" and "community school" are not synonymous. The term "community education" designates the overall philosophy and concept whereas the "community school" is the identifiable location and the base of operation from which community education usually is implemented.

Community education is a process which evolves over a period of time and is made up of several components. Although variations in the evolutionary process are numerous the diagram illustrates a sequence common in many communities. It shows the components as "building blocks" in implementing the total concept.

COMPONENTS OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION


community organization and development
community centering K-12 programs
citizens involvement and participation
interagency coordination, cooperation, collaboration
lifelong learning and enrichment programs
expanded use of school facilities
Community Schools = Community Centers

Expanded Use of School Facilities

Utilization of school facilities is the concern of many community and educational leaders. Sylvia Porter, nationally syndicated columnist, wrote of the waste and disuse of idle public school facilities:

> Our public schools are to an appalling degree unused for long periods representing an abuse of schools and an extravagance that America simply cannot afford . . . . Most of the schools financed and maintained by taxes are closed for a startling 50% of the time.[2]

A basic concept of community education that had and still has strong appeal in the majority of communities, is opening school buildings on a planned, organized basis so that educational facilities and plants become community-centered schools. Community schools can be open during the entire year, 18 hours a day or longer if necessary and they become a place where people of all ages gather to learn, to enjoy themselves, and to be involved in community problem solving efforts.

Owen Kiernan, NASSP's executive secretary, reflected the growing acceptance of community education concepts within the past several years among secondary school principals and other educators in the following statement:

> The day is gone when the school can be placed figuratively on a hill outside of town. It's time we got the school into the community and the community into the school.[3]

Lifelong Learning and Enrichment

During the past decade, learning as a life-time activity has become a fundamental theme. As society has increased in complexity, the need for continuous educational opportunities has also become apparent.

The responsibilities for the design and development of continuous learning reside in all major institutions of society and at all levels of the formal and informal educational systems. Every institution shares responsibility for fostering lifelong learning and developing a commitment to self-education. What the school does is dependent on what churches, families, employers, and government do or do not do to reinforce the motivation and the opportunities for people to learn.

Many labels have been used to describe lifelong learning. It is variously referred to as continuing education, adult education, career education, informal education, and recurrent

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[2]Sylvia Porter, "Your Money's Worth," Field Newspaper Syndicates, Dec. 1974.

[3]Ken Gehert, "The Case for Community Education," Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Letter, Vol. 1, Aug. 1974.

education. These labels, however, can creat false impressions because they are related almost exclusively to the adult population. Lifelong learning is more accurately described as the totality of learning that takes place during the life of an individual.

The acceptance of learning and education as continuous and lifelong processes, rather than a series of terminal behaviors and unrelated experiences, is a basic part of the philosophical foundation of community education. One of the basic components of a community education program is providing a delivery system and community processes that involves all ages and addresses all "cradle-tograve" learning needs and desires.

The types of activities and programs go beyond what is considered by many traditional elementary and secondary education personnel as the formal education domain. Providing a broad range of programs and learning opportunities, as compared to providing specifically defined or structured learning content for educational processes, is a major distinguishing factor between community education and traditional K-12 education. The elementary or secondary community school is used as a vehicle to launch programs of early childhood education, extended day, youth enrichment, adult education, leisure and recreation, senior citizen activities, as well as many other specifically labeled programs which are dimensions of lifelong learning and enrichment.

Community educators do not just organize classes, activities and specialized community activities. They facilitate the interaction process for defining and assessing needs; assist in finding the resources to meet these needs; and help people decide what is important to themselves and their communities.

Interagency Collaboration

There is much discussion regarding the role of the public schools in facilitating the development of a system which coordinates the activities and services of other agencies and organizations, service clubs, youth groups, and social service agenices into a total program for a community.

The function of the community school is to serve as a base for coordination and cooperation between agencies which will aid in eliminating gaps in and overlap and duplication of community services. The community involvement process provides a base from which to identify human needs and community services. The "brick and motar" of a community school site provides a location from which to assist agenices and organizations in coordinating and delivering their service at the local level.

Many communities, both urban and rural, have multiple service agencies that deal specifically with one service or need area. For most of these communities, there is a critical need for greater coordination among agencies.

The process of developing inter-agency collaboration and cooperative planning in the delivery of human services is a challenge that must be met. Community educators can facilitate neighborhood as well as intra-agency communication so that there is increase awareness of what is available in the way of services, equipment, personnel, and financial resources.

Citizen Involvement and Participation

Community education relies upon democratic methods being put into practice. An important principle on which community education is based is that those affected by any program or decision-making process should have input in the planning and decision making.

Although efforts to increase community participation are frequently time consuming, there is great potential for education to enhance two-way communication and to reduce the distrust and misunderstanding that can exist. Research studies indicate that the psychological well-being of people in a community and their degree of positiveness toward education experiences are enhanced

when all community members believe that they have meaningful involvement in decisions that affect them.

Professionals have often resisted citizen involvement. Lack of experience, coupled with inadequate conceptualization of community participation, is responsible for much of the controversy.

Those who equate an active role of involvement and participation with the more restricted legal implications of community control have failed to understand the difference between participation and control. The citizen involvement process provides a range of options and programs that give people opportunities to share concerns and talents that assist in establishing an educational system more responsive to the needs and desire of people.

Community Education and K-12 Curriculum

The one component advocated by supporters of community education that has had limited impact on the American education scene is the integration of all components of the philosophy with the formal K-12 program. The rationale of integration is the previously mentioned mutually interdependent linkage of the home, the school, and the community that provides and reinforces learning experiences.

A basic tenet in educational planning is maintenance of effort to improve the quality of interaction between student and teacher no matter where that experience takes place. Efforts to create and provide action-learning programs in the community setting, as well as to bring more community people with special skills, talents, experiences into the formal classroom as resource specialists or supporters to professional teachers, have often met with opposition or indifference.

Integration of community education into the subject matter curriculum of K-12 means structuring programs around not only lifelong education opportunities but also life-centered living and concerns for improvement of the quality of life in a community. Elsie Clapp, an early leader of the community school movement, promoted the idea that a school must become a place where learning and living converge so that what goes on in the community merges with what goes on in the activities of the classroom.

Community Development

Community education efforts have a practical operational base comparable to the field of community development. The similarity has become apparent as community education programs evolve in practical settings and as concepts such as opening school buildings, lifelong learning and enrichment, interagency collaboration and citizen involvement, gain increasing acceptance. A correlation exists between the assumptions and principles of the two fields. Warden, in "Weaving Community Education and Community Development,"[4] discussed the common thread and strengths of these two interrelated movements.

Miles, in his article "Can Community Development and Community Education be Collaborative?" identifies community development in the context of initiating and of developing supportive human relationships. He described it as "a building process of residents together with planners, program developers, and decision-makers—all collectively working to identify local and city-wide needs and to develop resource responses which will resolve and reduce these needs." Miles identified community education as a "means for increasing city-wide structures for

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[4]John Warden, "Weaving Community Education and Community Development," Seldon Papers, No. 10, 1973, University of Oregon, Eugene, Ore.

communication and problem-solving within neighborhoods and between neighborhoods and government." [5]

Neighborhoods need internal community organization if communication and citizens' involvement is to be effective. Community education proposes a structure for community organization which can lead to a comprehensive support system for human and community services. In this context, community education could make a contribution to the theory and practice of community development.

A Collection of Varying Views

As the community education concept is implemented, different emphasis is placed upon what is most important. Even among "community educators" there are varying views about the ranking and the components of community education discussed here. These varying views lead to differing approaches to implementing the concept. The particular point of view of individuals in policy making and leadership positions is reflected in their assessment of the value of community education and in the plans for implementing the concept.

The following collection of articles presents the view of policy makers and administrators concerning community education. The articles in Section I express an overall view of the concept and its potential. In Section II, the articles outline plans for implementing and integrating community education into the education system. The articles in Section III reflect insights from practional experience with the concept.

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[5] Lewis B. Miles, "Can Community Development and Community Education Be Collaborative?" *Journal of Community Development Society,* Vol. 5, No. 2, Fall 1974.

Tomorrow's School

by William J. Ellena
Superintendent of Schools
Charlottesville, Virginia

Community schools and community education are almost as old as civilization. A cave and the surrounding hillsides served as the first one-room "community school," where mother and father taught son and daughter the techniques of survival, food procurement, and homemaking. An unexpect lightning bolt introduced the first "hot lunch" program, and the adjacent territory provided the terrain and resources for community education. As man casts off the bonds of earthbound knowledge and soars to new intellectual heights, he must unlearn as well as learn.

The Inexorable Course of Change

Over the years the world surrounding the original community school has changed almost constantly, with new forms of community education undergoing continuous development and adaptation. In the United States, log cabins, sod huts, and other one-room schools were being raised by local community groups until the early part of this century. In fact, a few one-room schools featuring potbellied stoves, leaky roofs, and outdoor plumbing are still in use in isolated sections.

Today's one-room community school, however, may well be a storefront, early childhood education and community center located in a high-density urban ghetto. Newly emerging community schools are being designed to serve people in an ever more complex and rapidly changing world—a world in which many people are looking back with nostalgia at what they believe to have been a simpler and more satisfying life.

Ours is a vigorous, restless, dynamic society characterized by a soaring population, a rising standard of living, multiplication of material comforts, a lengthening life span, new job opportunities, changing educational expectations, shrinking distances, and rapid communication. Scientists are feverishly at work planning electronic and nuclear developments; military leaders are experimenting with new weapons and devices for defense; physicians and surgeons are searching for new ways to combat disease; sociologists and statisticians are plotting and projecting population curves; planning divisions of industrial organizations are at work on blueprints for new factories and new products; and government officials are striving to anticipate the problems that will have to be faced in the years immediately ahead.

These and other accelerated and dramatic changes in society have rendered the older forms of community education obsolete. Yet many recent education trends are attempting to recapture some of the unique advantages of the schools of a bygone era. Close and personal contact between the school and the community, direct community participation in the operation of the school, adult education programs, little schools, and decentralization are but a few of the old concepts being adapted to today's larger and more complex society.

Teaming for Progress

The past decade has also witnessed many changes in school design. These educational and architectural changes have paralleled the rapid changes taking place in society. Educators, architects, and other community leaders are teaming together to plan new kinds of community schools, deriving their function and form from the rapid socioeconomic-political changes taking place in the world surrounding and being served by the school. Schools are returning to their original people-serving function. Community schools are being rediscovered, adopted, and adapted by the people they serve.

An Exciting Vision

Progress is being made. Thoughtful educators and forward-looking school systems are well aware of the pressing need to help young people grasp the outlines of a new epoch filled with seemingly contradictory concepts. School buildings—the educational facilities of tomorrow—are becoming places where people *like* to go to learn. They are becoming more open.

- Tomorrow's school will be for everyone—the young and the old, the gifted and the handicapped, the academically talented and the vocationally oriented. Schools will be different but rather than having disparity in quality, they will have diversity in excellence.
- Tomorrow's school will reach out to the places that enrich the human spirit—to the museums, the theaters, the art galleries, to the parks and rivers and mountains.
- It will ally itself with the city, its busy streets and factories, its assembly lines and laboratories—so that the world of work does not seem an alien place for the student.
- Tomorrow's school will be the center of community life, for grownups as well as children—a shopping center of human services. It might have a community health clinic or a public library, a theater and recreation facilities.
- It will provide formal education for all citizens—and it will not close its doors any more at three o'clock. It will employ its buildings 'round the clock and its teachers 'round the year.

No Need for Locks

For years the school's front doors were "padlocked" during June, July, and August. Buildings stood idle. Teachers were out of work. The American people held tenaciously to an old school calendar that had its origin in our earlier agrarian life. Now, however, the almost universal practice of leaving school plants and personnel idle at a time in our history when every available resource is needed is being carefully reexamined.

To the practical-minded citizen, the hardheaded businessman, and the anxious parent who desparately wants broader and better educational opportunities for his children, 'round the clock and 'round the calendar use of school facilities makes a lot of sense. Why?

1. The school plant already exists, fully equipped and ready for use.
2. The overhead costs of administration continue to be approximately the same whether schools are open or closed during the summer months.
3. Fixed charges such as insurance, interest, and capital outlay costs remain fairly constant (whether the schools are in operation or shut down).
4. The teaching staff—the community's most important educational asset—is (in considerable measure) already mobilized.
5. Many children of school age are left without any constructive programs during the late afternoons, evenings, and summer months.

Better utilization of existing facilities and personnel is an exciting approach to achieving a more adequate education. No longer should people—young and old alike—be repelled by "No

Trespassing" signs on school property. The tide of isolation has changed and is flowing strongly in the opposite direction. Schoolhouse doors should be open and signs everywhere should read "WELCOME."

Our Capacity for Impact

Community education's general objective is to make the school the center of a neighborhood by providing educational, recreational, cultural and social programs and other human services selected to meet the interest and needs of all interested residents—children, youth and adults. This dynamic approach to individual and community improvement is based on the premise that local resources can be drawn together to assist in solving most neighborhood problems and that the public schools and governmental services have a capacity for far greater impact upon the neighborhood than they are currently making in education and community service. The philosophy which conceives the school as a *service center operating in partnership* with other groups within the community, has become the basis for a dynamic approach to educational and community development.

Community schools are open both days and evenings year-'round and become a place where people, children as well as adults, go both to learn and to enjoy themselves. Lifelong learning and enrichment opportunities for all ages are provided in the school facility, but are not necessarily confined to the building itself. As stated earlier, the school allies itself to the city, its busy streets and factories, its assembly lines, laboratories, shops, agencies and organizations.

Community education encourages the sharing and greater use of human talents and resources. Citizens are invited into classrooms to share talents and experiences with students, in addition to being involved in sharing with other adults and students in evening and weekend sessions. Community education provides the means by which the educational staff takes steps to improve community relations, to develop community understanding and to help define community goals. Because citizens become involved in the decision-making process, a climate of mutual respect and acceptance prevails and results in improved community-school relationships.

To avoid duplication of programs and facilities, many local community groups cooperate with the school administrators and city staff in the coordination of programs and services. Pooling strengths in inter-agency coordination and cooperation results in programs and services better able to meet the wide variety of needs and wants that exist in a community.

Of, For, and By the People

Community education in the past has consisted largely of programs either to educate people about the schools or to instruct them in the schools. In other words, such community education as has existed has placed the major emphasis on the school rather than on the community. This, of course, accounts for the fact that the term "community school" is quite frequently considered synonymous with community education.

Modern community education philosophy requires an expansion of the community school into a comprehensive community service center of which the school itself is only a part. The center must draw upon all its resources—people, institutions, organizations, and businesses—for planning, operation, and sustenance. Education and service must be available to the people through educational radio and television, extension workers, visiting teachers, and other means of outreach, with the community center serving as only the hub or home base. To be effective, community education must be taken into the homes, clubrooms, churches, and youth and adult hangouts, rather than serving only those who are able and willing to come to a school or center. As a matter of fact, one reason the community school movement has had so little impact to date is that those

members of the community who most need education and services of all kinds are the very ones least likely to go to school looking for them and the least likely to be involved in planning programs relevant to their needs.

A Sense of Belonging

Working together on problems of mutual concern in the development of community educational programs can often create a community where none previously existed. The impersonal climate in many urban neighborhoods has undoubtedly exacerbated various kinds of local problems. As people come together to consider ways of improving their lot in life, their association creates a sense of belonging. New resources in the community are "discovered," new opportunities open up, and true community spirit, previously unknown, develops. Community identity emerges, and the educational program is enriched through many avenues not leading to the schoolhouse door. The community itself, with all its people, institutions, agencies, businesses, and terrain, is the school.

A keystone of this new and expanded concept of community education is the acceptance of broader responsibility by boards of education and educational administrators. They provide the expertise and leadership needed in working with all agencies, institutions, and citizens of the community in the design and implementation of programs and delivery systems at whatever places and in whatever ways will most effectively meet the total educational needs of the community. To accept this responsibility is a big step. If taken, it means that boards of education must be that, and not mere school boards, as they are so frequently and accurately called. Nor can chief educational officers be just superintendents of schools. Rather, board members and administrators must accept the improvement of society as a prime function of public education. They must recognize that such improvement can come about only through a total uplifting—social, economic, intellectual, physical—and total involvement of all of the members of society, not just children and youth.

A New Dawn

During the last few years a number of factors have come together to cause superintendents, board members, parents, teachers, students, and the administrators of other public agenices to reevaluate the relationship of the school to the community. People have begun to realize that the communities' facilities can be put to good use by the entire community as a whole, not just by students. For instance, swimming pools and gymnasiums can be used for indoor recreation, instructional swimming, and health programs, kitchens for meals-on-wheels to the elderly or the handicapped, and machine shops for learning new job skills or simply pursuing hobbies. School auditoriums can be used for theater and music, dance and lectures; teaching spaces and libraries can be used for community college or university extension courses, or for meetings or discussion groups.

Each new community education center, as it develops, will be different from every other center because it will be responding precisely and organically to local needs. Not only will its architectural form be different, but also its programs, its services, and even its curricula. Its programs and services will be designed to respond to local needs, its curricula to respond to local learning processes, to the local children's frames of reference, and to the precise mesh of education with local aspiration. Its architecture will integrate carefully and precisely with a piece of existing city.

And Finally

We have only begun. Much yet remains to be done. But it will be done. The community school of tomorrow will be *of* the community rather than merely *in* the community. Through its program, its organization and its operation it will emphasize unity with community rather than aloofness from it. The community school or service center will be open to all, responsive to all, and a vital part of the fullness of life around it. A vision of a new dawn is unfolding.

Can Community Education Restore the American Dream?

by Alton C. Crews
Superintendent, Charleston County Public Schools
Charleston, South Carolina

The Cycle of Educational Change

The last decade of this quarter of a century in public education bears significantly upon the whole movement of Community Education. The end of World War II was accompanied by a large baby-boom; and with GI Joe coming home, the public's expectations of what education could do for their off-spring greatly increased. This was particularly true in the South. Many significant pieces of federal legislation came from the GI Bill of Rights that helped bring the rural people of the South off the farms and cotton fields, and out of the textile mills and coal mines. There was a desire to educate some people for the first time, and to raise their level of aspiration. In the decade of the 1950's, when this baby-boom hit the schools, there developed the highest level of public support for education that has ever occurred in this nation.

Many other things happened in this decade that began to change the face of education in the nation. It was in the latter part of the 1950's when Russia sent out the most significant visual aid that man has ever devised, Sputnik. That feat also changed education toward a unique direction. America was accused of not being able to turn out enough technicians, engineers, scientists, and mathematicians to meet its needs. Suddenly, we were thrust into second place in an international space regatta. As a result, the schools immediately responded, as schools always do. The country moved toward an educational stance that was referred to as "we educate the best and shoot the rest rest" kind of philosophy. The philosophy prevailed from the latter 1950's to the early part of 1960's.

In the 1960's, with the Watts', the Newarks' and the Detroits', as well as other civil disturbances in this country, the pendulum began to swing in an entirely different direction. From that chaotic first five years of the 1960's with its disruptions, riots, burnings, and a protest of frustration by the "have nots" in our society, a significant amount of federal legislation began to emerge. Even though some of it was hastily concocted, legislation poured out of Congress at an amazing rate, making a great deal of funds available. A lot of things happened as a result, and a lot of mistakes were made.

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Towards the end of the 1960's and in the early part of the 1970's, educators began to take stock of what was happening because each of the legislative provisions had built-in assessment requirements. There began a rash of critical analyses attempting to assess the net effects of the massive federal aid that had gone into the public schools, primarily of a compensatory nature designed to offset the effects of education deprivation, particularly for Black Americans. The Jencks and Coleman reports concluded that it really didn't matter what education did, for in the final analysis, you didn't change children. Home life, the environment, and the community had far more influence on children than the six hours a day, 180-190 days a year of normal schooling.

We have almost come full cycle and have done it in the last twenty-five years. We are now to a point at the federal level where the pump is drying up in terms of federal dollars. I am of the opinion that in the very near future we are going to arrive at a second generation. We are going to come to some second generation of effort to get out of these major social and economic ills that beset us in this nation. I hope that the last ten or fifteen years will have taught us a great deal about how we may go about it.

The Potential of Community Education

The concept of community education is not just arriving on the scene, it has been here a long time. But it is coming to the forefront at a most propitious time, at a time when it may well be one of the answers to the many problems besetting us today. There are other things on the horizon; but in regard to the problems and opportunities that we face in this country, nothing offers more real possibilities and challenges than the concept of community education.

There are many among us that agree with the Jencks and Coleman reports and many among us that contend that education is a failure. There is much evidence that public organized education probably does stand in doubt in terms of its ability to deal with the poor and to deal particularly with the problems of the Black community and the problems of the "have nots" in our society. I believe the American dream that education is a bridge or escalator to a better life may be somewhat tarnished now.

I have faith in the American dream; but I also have concerns that the fragmented approach to solving social problems that now exist in most communities in American simply will not do the job. Most communities have many agencies that deal with areas of educational, health, social, cultural, and recreational needs. Several years ago, in our county, we did a survey in conjunction with out United Appeal. We found twenty-nine agencies in our city of 250,000 people involved in some phase of education or in some type of service that was designed to improve the competencies of citizens. We found about twenty-five agencies that were involved in delivering health services to people; some public, some private, some private with public funding. We found ten or fifteen agencies involved in delivering recreational services. These same kinds of statistics exist in your community today where there are a great number of agencies, public and private, delivering services for human betterment, but with virtually no kind of coordination of those activities.

I contend that the whole concept of community education has risen to the surface because of a need and it is taking hold across the country because the need is there in almost every community. Community education offers this real possibility of a restoration of the American dream that has been so tarnished in the last ten or fifteen years.

I've had the privilege of being involved in two community education programs. They sprung from entirely different needs in two communities. The first community was a large bedroom school district in suburban Atlanta, a very well-to-do district that was growing rapidly. We had to build a classroom a day just to stand still in that community. Other governmental services were also growing, and the people in charge of the basic government of that county along with the school

board recognized that there should have been some kind of coordination. As a result, we came together and jointly purchased parks and school sites across that county to build school buildings where the other governmental agencies could provide the human services that they were having to provide.

In the community where I serve now, there is an entirely different problem. Here the problem is the large numbers of children coming from bankrupt homes, from homes where they've had little security and little success. The role of trying to compensate for the home environment has been thrust upon the public schools which do not have the expertise or financial means to grapple with the total problem. We had to find a way to deliver coordinate human services.

The community education concept was broad enough to meet the conditions that existed in those two very different kinds of communities. In each community, community education programs were begun, but they were based on entirely different backgrounds and different motives. Community education provided a way for those of us who work in the public sector to try to bring coordinated services to human beings.

Leadership is Key

At the present time, I see no other movement on the horizon that comes close to the potential that is inherent in the community education concept. But, I think there are certain conditions that must exist if a community education program is going to become a reality. The key is that the school board and superintendent must be sold on the concept initially. Unless this happens, it is almost impossibile, in my opinion, to see community education become a reality. These are the key groups because one represents the people and is elected to set policies for governing the school system. The other represents chief executive officers employed by school boards to carry out board mandates. That is the beginning point. If you can get that support, then I think you can see community education begin to move.

The other part of the task, of course, is to secure the cooperation of other agencies and organizations who deliver human services. This is difficult to do because of jealousy. Each agency is a little separate empire; each one tries to protect its turf; each one does not want to be encroached upon by anyone else. The battle ahead for community education leaders is to develop a workable format to overcome that jealousy to the point where we can deliver human services in a package that can be managed.

Whose Responsibility is Coordination: Local or Federal?

Who will bring together these fragments into a whole and who will coordinate the program? I do not know the answer at this point. But, there is a tendency in this country whenever we have a problem to think it is going to be solved in Washington. That focus is the opposite of the community education concept. If the people in the community themselves don't solve the problems, the chances that Washington will solve them are very remote.

I am uncertain at this point regarding the role of Washington. Many of you would possibly disagree that the federal authorities ought not to be the ones to mandate this coordination, but I have become somewhat disillusioned after serving as a superintendent for almost twenty years in four major southern cities. I have become disillusioned about the effects that funds have when they are so catagorical that they force a program into unnatural and segmented parts.

I am not certain who is to be the glue that puts this thing together from an organizational, administrative, and legal point of view. But, I am certain of one thing. At the heart, it must be the public schools, because we have more in sheer numbers, dollars, investments, and expertise. We have more going than any other single agency in existence to try to bring these things together. The

question must be raised as to whether or not boards of education are going to be willing for the public schools to assume the responsibility of expanding the concept of education from the cradle to the grave.

There is a role, though, for the government to play in the process. Possibly, the most significant role would be one in which federal dollars would be available to a community when wiggling parts are brought together into a workable whole under guidelines and/or criteria that would be acceptable to most communities in this country. If we could use the tax gathering power, might, and expertise of the federal government, and could use these resources as an incentive in the purely American tradition of the free enterprise system to build cooperation rather than competition, then maybe federal dollars and legislation could play an important role in the community education movement.

Caution – Don't Oversell Community Education

Although the potential of community education is great, I would suggest that one must be very careful not to overkill the idea. Promoting the idea that community education is the panacea, that it will solve all the ills, can have disasterious results. A statement that I read by one of the most famous authors in the community education movement is an example. "There are many of us that have so much faith in community education that if implemented throughout the world it would solve all of today's deep rooted social problems and bring about harmony and peace among all nations." Now this is a marvelous statement, but we have seen the same kind of statements made in the 1960's when the "Great Society" was going to solve all the problems of America. There was an oversell that had a kickback.

About five years ago, another good concept was one called career education. It is still around, and it is a marvelous concept. But the same tendency occurred, to believe that it was going to solve all the problems of our community. They simply oversold and it fell short.

So, I suggest that those of us who are enthusiastic about the community education concept can cause reactionary consequences later on if we oversell. We need to be cautious, to do more and talk less. In the final analysis, if we can exhibit what community education does, that will be the best possible promotion.

Public Schools and the Community: Strengthening Quality Education in the 1970's

by James B. Hunt
Governor, State of North Carolina

Education and Society

As society has grown much larger and more complex, a disturbing trend has appeared. This is a growing distance between people and nearly all of the institutions designed to serve their needs. Some people question whether these institutions, mostly set up in an era of small towns and farms, can adequately adapt to serve a more urban society. The questions center on how well institutions can cope with the demands of more people with more diverse needs and still maintain quality service.

Especially disturbing is the weakening of ties between our communities and our public schools. School district consolidation has been part of the adaptation of public schools to an urban society, and it has resulted in larger schools and greater specialization in education. Yet it has contributed to a narrowing of contacts between the schools and the community. As contact has lessened, public concern about educational performance has increased and public support has tended to decline.

The trend has brought changes in public attitudes in the past few years. There is a widespread and rising questioning of the results of public education and less public confidence in the educational worth of a high school diploma. One belief is that larger systems have made the schools less accessible and more impersonal, with teachers and administrators becoming insulated from parents. The second belief is that the schools have failed, in part, in their primary mission, that is to educate children the fundamental subjects–reading, writing, and arithmetic.

These perceptions may not be accurate reflections of conditions in the public schools. But they do exist and must be considered in any effective educational policy.

A number of additional concerns have surfaced, some of which can become major issues. These include the problem of maintaining discipline in the classroom, the wide variations in per pupil spending among local school districts, the fact that school facilities lie idle part of the day and all during the summer, and the view that the schools are not responding to parents and taxpayers about improving the effectiveness of education.

At the same time, the complexities facing the North Carolina classroom teachers, school administrators and other personnel, as they have struggled with a growing and changing system, have increased. Often in the storm center of community concerns, which invariably focus on the schools, they have maintained and strengthened the education process under difficult circumstances.

**Excerpts from a position statement, July 10, 1976, and research paper for proposed North Carolina Community Schools Act.*

North Carolina Today

North Carolina, despite its historical setting of small community schools and close school-community relationships, has not been excluded from the national trend. Rapid urbanization, large-scale school consolidation and area-wide busing have all contributed to a steady drifting away of families from close ties with the public schools.

Concern about the quality of education is particularly strong in our state. Part of the concern comes from low achievement standings of North Carolina pupils on national test comparisons, especially in reading. This has given additional weight to the view that the public schools have fallen short on the "basics," that we must improve our teaching of basic subjects.

North Carolina, according to recent census estimates, had a population of 5,451,000 in 1975, placing us eleventh in the nation. By 1980, we will be the tenth most populous state, passing Massachusetts.

We are not used to thinking of ourselves in these terms—as among the largest states, as having a significant impact on the course of national events, as having full responsibility for the governing of so many people and the meeting of their service needs. How well are we prepared to meet these needs—particularly those in education?

We are a State of large local school systems:

In 1975, North Carolina had 149 local administrative units, ranking 33rd in the nation. With nearly 1.2 million students enrolled in the public schools during the fall of 1975, again 11th largest in the nation, we averaged nearly 8000 students per local unit. The U. S. average was under 2800 per unit, about one-third of the North Carolina average and nearly all states with large public school enrollment were also were below the North Carolina average.

We are a State with relatively insufficient educational resources:

North Carolina ranked only 16th in the nation in number of instructional staff for 1974 and 4th highest in number of students per public school teacher, 11 percent above the U. S. average. We ranked 48th for 1975 in percent of male teachers, less than two-thirds of the national average and 30th in salary level, less than 90 percent of the national average.

We are a State that, as a whole, does not spend much on public schools:

North Carolina per capita spending of state and local government for higher education ranked 23rd, slightly above the national average. But per capita spending for public schools ranked 41st, less than 85 percent of the national average.

We are a State with exceptionally heavy assistance from State Government:

In 1975-76, North Carolina ranked 2nd in percent of public school revenue from state government, over 50 percent above the national average. We ranked 19th in percent of school revenue from the federal government, over 25 percent above the national average. But in local government support we ranked 47th, less than 45 percent of the national average.

The picture of education in North Carolina that emerges from the rankings is a most challenging one. Our public school enrollment is among the largest in the country, yet we fall way short of the number of teachers needed to reduce class size to the national average. It would take 5500 additional teachers to reduce the pupil/teacher ratio in North Carolina to the U. S. average.

We spend less money per person on public schools relative to most other states, yet in percent of state aid to schools we rank second in the nation. The average size of our local school unit is far larger than for the country as a whole but we are far below the national average in percent of male teachers and below in salary level.

Taken together, the perceptions and concerns of the public and the statistical rankings raise serious questions about how the public schools should adapt to an era of rapid urbanization and widely differing pupil needs. They raise questions about the directions that we must follow to

strengthen quality education in the schools.

The picture of education that emerges is one that requires a clear commitment of our citizens to quality education in the future. If this type of commitment is not made now, we are in danger of being overwhelmed by the sheer size of our system of public education in the future.

Any program for strengthening the quality of education in the public schools must respond to prevailing aspirations held by the community at large for their children. Without continued and active public support for excellence, no effort to maintain quality education can succeed.

Closer School-Community Ties

Except for recent years, local schools in North Carolina have been used as a focal point for community activities. At both the state and local levels, laws and policy have supported the position that the public schools are owned by the community and may be used for a wide range of community activities and services. These activities and services in the school are possible so long as they do not detract from or hinder the public education program and functions of the school.

Community use of public school facilities varies considerably among areas, but ordinarily, most buildings and grounds are considerably under-utilized. This is true despite a growing local agency need for community service centers.

Educators generally agree that, in order to best serve the child, the school must be able to relate to family and community attitudes and perceptions. Most also agree that they are ill-equipped, at present, to do so effectively.

Although the General Statutes (G. S. – 115-70) provide for the establishment of local school advisory councils to local boards of education, not all counties have actively utilized these councils. Where they have been active, they have contributed to much closer school-community ties and also have proven most valuable in assisting the schools on matters of common concern.

Our principal concern should be to seek closer school-community ties in two ways: through community use of schools and through active local advisory councils. The trend toward lessening of ties between schools and the community must be reversed if we are to achieve our objective of quality education.

North Carolina and America seem to have lost a sense of community and to have lost faith in the American dream that education is a means to a better life. I have faith in the American dream; but I also have concerns that the fragmented approach to solving social problems, that now exist in most communities in North Carolina will simply not do the job.

At the present time, I see no other movement on the horizon that comes close to community education's potential of restoring faith in the American dream and recreating a "sense of community" and close relationship between schools, communities, and individuals than through our public education system.

Experience with this concept in other states indicates that it is effective for re-establishing school-community ties, for increasing parent involvement and for expanding needed services in the community. It also can be an effective way of re-building the people-to-people ties that bind a group of families into a community.

A Community Schools Act

Therefore, I will propose a Community Education Act, the purposes of which are:

1. To make provision for involving the public in determining the role education will play in their lives;
2. To assist citizens of all ages in the identification and resolution of individual, family and community problems and to focus the total community resources, human, financial and

physical on meeting the education needs of the citizens of the State of North Carolina in such a fashion that:

a. Senseless and costly duplication is avoided
b. People of different backgrounds are given the encouragement and opportunity to help themselves to a better life
c. Local institutions–schools, government, buisness–become genuinely responsive to human wants and needs.

Process is the heart of Community Education. It is a method or technique to interest and involve people within a community to identify their needs and desires, and to develop ways to satisfy them. It is a way of involving people in community decisions which affect them, and of organizing and activating citizens in the community for maximum development of individual and community potential.

Programs are the activities and services which are developed and implemented in response to the needs and desires expressed through the Community Education process.

Anticipated Outcomes of the Act

The purpose of the Community Schools Act is to encourage greater community and parent involvement with the public schools and increase their consideration of how the schools could have a continuing role in community life. The Act offers a process through which families can become cooperatively involved in identifying individual, family and community problems, in mobilizing and coordinating the necessary resources to work on these problems through use of the public schools, and in offering advice and guidance to each school unit.

The community schools concept means that the public schools, which belong to the community, become activity centers for the community. The traditional role of the public school is that of a formal learning center for the young, operating six hours a day, five days a week, 39 weeks a year. Community schools expand this role to a center for young and old alike, operating virtually around the clock, all year long. And they incorporate use of the technical institutes, community colleges and institutions of higher education as appropriate.

As community schools grow, local agency programs are enchanced and expanded through citizen participation. Statistics in other states where similar programs have been started show that community involvement and support has grown considerably for activities such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Big Brothers and Sisters, YMCA, YWCA, recreation departments, senior citizen clubs and others. The community schools approach also can become a way of channeling volunteer talent into the public schools for the primary reading program or for general enrichment of in-school contacts with children. And it also could channel community volunteers into other community services centered on the schools.

The Community Schools Act would provide for the formation of Community Advisory Councils for every school unit within a local school district. It would spell out the manner in which members should be selected for the councils and establish a size limitation on each council. The key to successful implementation of the Community Schools Act is enthusiastic, widespread local participation. This participation would be encouraged by the availability of state funds for local staff support and a minimum of state-local regulations to impede local program flexibility under the Act.

Community Advisory Councils represent a most effective way to develop closer ties between schools and the community. They are particularly important in North Carolina, which is a State of relatively large local administrative units. The Advisory Councils offer a way for parents to become involved with the schools and to overcome the difficulty of feeling apart from the educational

process in a large school system.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction would have the responsibility for developing statewide policy guidelines for local district participation in the Community Schools Act. The State Board of Education would have authority for final approval of the policy guidelines and for review and approval of local district proposals for participation. In addition, the State Board would have authority to distribtue community education funds to local districts in accordance with the adopted policy guidelines and based upon initial recommendations of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Local boards of education would decide upon participation in the Community Schools Act and develop general policies for local Community Schools programs. Where technical institutes, community colleges and other educational institutions desire to participate, the local policies would be developed in cooperation with these institutions.

Each participating school would help organize a Community Schools Advisory Council made up of community residents, students, public school staff, representatives from cooperating organizations and participating governmental agencies. The function of each council would be to provide, on an advisory basis, direction for the community schools program in each respective public school. The Council would consider ways to encourage families to participate and ways to improve channels of communication between public school staff and the community.

This program should begin during the fall of 1977. Implementation for one-half of the local districts in the state during fiscal year 1977-78 will require two million dollars. The funds will be used primarily to provide staff for support of Community Schools Advisory Council activity.

The advisory councils would be assisted by a community schools staff person employed by the local board of education and funded up to half-salary by the state.

Other Desired Outcomes

Increasing emphasis is being placed on the importance of the quality early learning experiences for development of the young child's intellectual potential. To help assure that this takes place, the parent's role as an educator of preschool children should be encouraged and supported by the public schools.

One thrust of the Community Schools program should be to design parent education programs. These programs would be developed to encourage and assist the public schools in playing a new role—that of helping parents improve their response to the educational needs of pre-school children. Parents would be instructed in the skills of motivating pre-schoolers at home to begin the process of learning.

Advisory councils also could examine the potential for related activities. One of these might be the availability of a wide range of family and child support services through the community schools facility.

The fourth R—responsible social behavior—is just as important as the other three R's for educational development. If a child is unable to discipline himself, he cannot learn and he also detracts from the learning environment for others. Education itself is a form of discipline, the self-discipline to learn how to learn.

There is a great need for community leadership in looking at the issue of student behavior and helping schools deal with discipline problems in a manner that enhances the educational process. The changing school and classroom environment in recent years is a result of many factors, not the least of which is the growth of school unit size in response to urbanization. Solutions to the behavior problem that are not just authoritative but also enhance the educational process are not easy to develop. The ultimate objective is not discipline itself but a better environment for learning

in the classroom and a more receptive student. Improved behavior is only part of the answer and unless the approach to discipline is supportive of an improved learning environment in the classroom, it will be counterproductive.

Under the framework of the Community Schools Act, each school district could establish a Character Education Program. This program would take the form of a Citizen's Task Force on Character Education appointed by local school boards. The Task Force could work in the following areas:

- identify positive activities which promote good morale and self-discipline
- identify and focus on root causes of the behavior problem in each local school district
- examine the scope and consequences of the behavior problem
- design and implement positive and effective programs to reduce discipline problems including alternatives to suspension.

Implications

Duplication of effort and funds is to be avoided. Other institutions as well as schools must become more responsive to local human needs. People must receive the necessary encouragement to use opportunities to improve themselves and to look after others.

Several important aspects of the Community School idea must be goals in North Carolina if closer school-community ties are to be achieved.

1. Through the community council, a decision-making model is built into the community so that community residents can identify what programs or improvements they need and how they can best use the available resources.
2. Individuals of all ages are afforded an opportunity to take advantage of their local schools. Programs for the elderly, young married couples or preschoolers are all considered in terms of their value to the community. The schools become "my school" to all patrons.
3. The life-long learning process is stimulated at all stages through maximum use of school facilities. Volunteers, community colleges and vocational training programs are used extensively to promote an educational community. Learning is recognized as valuable for all ages.
4. Local institutions are strengthened. As Community Schools grow, local agency programs are enhanced and expanded. Cooperation and coordination nourish enthusiasm upon which greater effort is produced.
5. People become involved in issues or programs that interest them and become involved in Community schools as volunteer activity leaders, community council members or program participants in the recreational, social, educational and cultural activities being offered at their local schools.

Results

I believe community education is the key to breaking down the distance and mistrust that has grown between our schools and our people. It is a process which demonstrates that public institutions can be: compassionate without coddling; charitable without condescending; responsive to human needs without robbing a recipient of self-respect. It is a process which rebuilds people to people ties and creates a sense of community. It is a process which involves people, schools and other community institutions in developing the maximum potential of people both as individuals and as a community.

But adoption of the Community Schools Act does not guarantee these results. It is going to take the hard work of a lot of people to not only turn present trends around but to create a climate of trust and a sense of community.

Public Education in Delaware: Time for a Change

by Pierre S. DuPont
Governor, State of Delaware

Meeting the challenge of providing the best possible education for all or our citizens is a big business in Delaware. Our total education budget is $215 million–approximately fifty percent of the total budget of the State. Of this, $165 million of state funds are spent on public education and $50 million on higher education. In addition to the funds spent by the State, local school districts spend about $50 million annually, and the federal government another $15 million in public education and even more in higher education.

In spite of these enormous expenditures in the area of education, the delivery of educational services in Delaware is uneven. Top students from our public schools rank with the very best students in the country as measured by competitive national tests, so, clearly, a top flight education is available and being delivered in the State of Delaware. But problems do exist in our educational system which need attention. 1970 figures indicated that there were more than 30,000 people in Delaware who had only completed eighth grade, and about 64,000 who had not graduated from high school. Clearly, our excellent education system has passed some individuals by.

Almost as serious as the dropout rate in our state is the plight of those who are nominally high school graduates who are found to be functionally illiterate. In 1976, a substantial percentage of Delaware's public school graduates, or near graduates, couldn't "cope" with the modern world. Employers time and time again state that minimum standards of reading, writing, and computation can no longer be uniformly found in all high school graduates. Clearly, our education system is failing these people as well.

A third problem in our educational system concerns those students whose training prepares them for jobs that don't exist; or conversely, are not trained for jobs that are available. At the end of May, 1976, our Department of Labor listed 2,568 open jobs. At the same time, unemployment exceeded seven percent, or about 20,000 people. The open jobs frequently called for specific skills in technical, sales, office processing, machine trades, and structural work. Clearly, then, our educational system is failing in matching skills training with available jobs.

Delaware needs a new set of educational priorities. I can only conclude that we have to begin shifting some of our educational priorities to meet these kinds of challenges in the coming decade.

I propose as top priorities in education during the next administration the following:

1. Concentrating our limited resources on insuring that every graduate can (a) read at least at

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**Excerpts from a position statement, September 9, 1976, Leadership Program #4.*

the eighth grade level, (b) compute well enough to hold down a job, and (c) organize ideas and write simple, clear prose, and will have either basic skills good enough for entrance into a meaningful post-secondary education or apprenticeship program, or salable skills in areas where jobs are available, particularly in the service trades.

2. Expanded support and programs throughout our state to encourage adults and youth drop-outs to come back into the school system, and particularly to get a high school diploma or the equivalent.
3. Adult Basic Education for those who need it and desire it, particularly those with less than an eighth grade education.
4. Expanding continuing education for adults and youth.
5. Providing an education for all handicapped individuals.
6. Coordinating the training of young people in post-high school institutions supported by public funds so that these students can fill the jobs realistically available to them.
7. Cooperative efforts with the federal government to undertake basic research to discover why basic achievement test scores are declining, and why so many students leave our school systems without acceptable reading, writing, and computation skills.

In order to meet these goals, I am not suggesting that we add new programs on top of what we are already doing. Rather, I am suggesting a reallocation of existing resources to get the job done by:

1. Working with local school boards to set up minimum achievement standards for graduation and procedures to progress towards these standards, and seeing that they are enforced.
2. Beginning community educational programs to change community, school, parent, and student attitudes about schools and to encourage dropping back into school after dropping out.
3. Making programs in our regular schools more flexible to allow for part-time education along with part-time jobs.
4. Expanding the already successful James Grove High School system for adults and dropouts.
5. Revitalizing the limited ($275,000 for sixteen centers) federal support for adult education for poor people through the coordination of the existing adult basic education programs and other educational efforts so that the maximum use is made out of the limited funds.

The basic decisions should continue to be primarily a function of the local school board, but it becomes very clear that success is going to depend upon doing fewer things, and doing them better, so that the basics are learned early. Local school districts may find it will be necessary to consider:

1. Concentrating primarily on the basic educational tasks in our schools and de-emphasizing social promotion by requiring each child to meet pre-set, locally determined standards in each grade before moving up. Providing remedial services at all levels to help children who are not making the required progress. Particular focus should be given to learning disabilities and other handicaps. Activating family, church, and community organizations to again pull their full weight in the whole educational system. Schooling should be recognized as only one part, although a very important part of education.
2. Establishing magnet school programs in centrally located areas to supplement possible reductions in the non-basic subjects.
3. Establishing meaningful occupational-vocational programs and programs to challenge the gifted student using outside community resources.
4. Removing the few, hardcore discipline problems from the classroom into other, more profitable learning environments. Special coordination with Delaware's new status offender program should be considered.

In my view, this program can be done without the need for major new commitments of resources. The key is reording of priorities—by the institutions themselves—toward the goals of a more effective educational structure. Coordination between the local school districts and higher education institutions will help. With a reallocation of resources and a reordering of our priorities, I think Delaware can be an even more effective learning society for all of our citizens throughout their entire lives.

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Learning for Effective Adulthood

by David W. Hornbeck
State Superintendent of Schools
Maryland State Department of Education

The Mission of Schooling

Schooling is a responsibility that includes but extends beyond "the school." Schooling, or the process of providing learning opportunities (education) for the young people of Maryland, is an obligation of the wider community. Schooling is that set of learning experiences which leads to effective and satisfying adulthood. To be effective and satisfied as an adult requires a fundamental ability to cope with oneself and others in a variety of settings. Those settings include one's family, one's community, and one's place of employment.

Schooling must, therefore, lead to competency in at least five areas of human activity.

1. Basic Skills—All people must be able to read, write, and calculate. We have reached a point where work experience, the use of leisure time, responsible citizenship and even meaningful family relationships require the use of the written word. People cannot buy groceries, fill out tax forms, and understand installment contracts without the ability to calculate. Thus, basic skills are before all else.
2. World of work—One's job is the source of economic survival and remains a primary source of one's identity. Schooling should lead to a salable skill and assistance in securing employment upon graduation for all who wish it. All public school youth should be aware of the options and opportunities of the world of work without racial or sexual bias. All should know and understand the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing post-secondary education and, thus, should emerge with realistic expectations which are, in part, dependent on our understanding that the speed of technological change dooms any attempt to teach skills that will last a lifetime. We must help people to respond flexibly to changes we cannot begin to predict.
3. World of leisure time—The present includes and the future contemplates increased leisure time. Today, many children spend as much time in front of the television set as they do in school. Schooling can help the student be involved in more creative and healthy activities. The arts and lifetime sports are but two of the possibilities.
4. World of Citizenship—The increasing complexity of our life together makes responsible citizenship more important than ever before. Citizenship includes activities in the electoral process; it includes participation in local civic affairs; it includes an understanding of the system of justice with effort to make it work.

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*Excerpts from a Report of the State Superintendent of Schools on the Work and Organization of the Maryland State Department of Education presented to the Maryland State Board of Education, December 22, 1976.

5. Survival skills—There are a range of other competencies which every adult should possess. These include consumer skills, parenting skills, interpersonal relation skills, mechanical skills and skills of personal finance. Schooling should equip all public school youth with these kinds of fundamental abilities.

If the schooling process is to result in these competencies, three ingredients are essential to each competency.

1. Information—The parts of speech, the multiplication tables, the location of employment want ads, the procedure for voter registration are all examples of fundamental bits of information necessary to competency.
2. Training toward specific skills—Sequential learning toward the skill of reading; the ability to read a blueprint; the skill to fill out an income tax form accurately are examples of the minimal skills required for competency.
3. Developing the capacity for critical thought—Reading, writing and arithmetic are useless without the ability to reason. Good judgment, not information or sheer skill, determines our quality of life. Ultimately, competency depends upon a person's ability to use information and skills wisely as they relate to each of the areas which are essential to effective adulthood.

Real learning toward competency requires participation in experience-based learning settings. Teachers cannot force learning; they can only guide students to and through a variety of learning experiences, helping develop personal and intellectual skills.

While effective adulthood rests fundamentally on the five areas of competency outlined above, there are other dimensions of an effective and satisfying life. While they are not subject to measurement as the foregoing are, they are important and schooling can make a major contribution to their development. The following principles again reflect the wider responsibility for schooling since much of what follows must take place in the family, church, and community.

1. Every student should become expert or at least very good at something. The area may be vocational or avocational, community or family-based, but genuine success in some activity is important to every human being.
2. Every student should understand the importance of developing and maintaining two or three close relationships to other people. That requires considerable effort, as caring about another person is hard work. But life without it is filled with insecurity and loneliness.
3. Every student should learn to have fun. A humorless life is dull and unrewarding for oneself and for those with whom one comes in contact. Work, family and play all can have a quality of joy if they can be approached with that expectation.
4. Every student should be helped to develop a delicate balance between looking at the world optimistically on the one hand and with skepticism on the other.
5. Every student should be encouraged to be a participant—a doer—not just an observer. One can help decide whether he/she will passively accept what life brings or will play a significant role in shaping his/her own destiny.
6. Every student should be led to expect much of himself/herself. If that occurs, much will result. In contrast, if little is expected, it will result in a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Finally, we reassert that schooling is the responsibility of self, family, neighborhood, church, community and the many institutions which impact on our lives. It is not the responsibility of the school alone. Neither competency nor the personal qualities to which the schooling process contributes can result from schools alone. They require the support and involvement of many others. But schools can and should provide leadership to others.

Project Basic

If the statement of the mission of schooling is to be reality rather than mere rhetoric, much is required of the Board, the Department, local systems and many others in the years immediately ahead. It will require hard thinking and hard doing. It will require cooperation on many levels.

There are a number of facts which confront us which make it imperative to adopt a results-oriented approach.

1. According to department figures, eight districts have drop-out rates of 30 percent or more. Seven other districts have rates of 20-30 percent. There are many reasons, not all or even most the fault of schools, but we must assume leadership in correcting this since many young people are leaving school functionally incompetent.
2. Still other students receive diplomas who cannot calculate, read, or write beyond the elementary level.
3. Further, many students who may have mastered the basic skills at the minimal level have not dealt with the other competency areas which I suggest are necessary to effective adulthood.
4. The Adult Functional Competency research conducted by The University of Texas under a grant from the U. S. Office of Education determined that fully 20 percent of the adult population of the United States is functionally incompetent when measured against criteria similar to what I have suggested.

There is, of course, much additional evidence which is pertinent but I believe your own experience is the most convincing.

If we are to undertake the task I have outlined, it raises a series of important questions which will require our attention.

1. Where does learning take place? We must shift our attention to the question, what are the best situations in which learning takes place, rather than our present tendency to ask how do we fit such learning situations into the school. Competence cannot be achieved in some areas absent real experience. Real experience is not possible exclusively within the classroom.
2. When will learning take place? Are twelve years of school, 45-50 minute class periods, 9-10 month school years, and semester long classes properly normative?
3. What kind of teacher retraining will be required? Who will provide it? Under what conditions?
4. What legal and logistical questions will require answers? How would the Child Labor laws impact on increased field/work/service learning experiences; or workman's compensation laws? How will we deal with logistical questions like transportation?
5. What are appropriate units of measurement regarding the competencies? Who determines the evaluation procedures to be used?

There are, of course, many other questions which will demand attention but these several are among the most seminal.

Let me turn now to outlining the process through which I propose meeting the challenges raised by Project Basic during the first two years.

The basic product which would result from the initial activity would be a Comprehensive Guide. It would consist of two basic parts. The first part would be the tentative first-draft statement of the competencies as they relate to the five areas of human activity. They would not, repeat not, be the final product. The second major part of the Comprehensive Guide will be for illustrative purposes alone. While the minimum competencies should be common across the state, the means of achieving them will vary due to the wide differences between counties, communities, schools, typography, demography and a host of other factors. I am suggesting, however, a "how to" section

because it is important that the Board and Department not be in the business of telling systems what to do without assisting in how to do it.

The process for producing the Comprehensive Guide would include at least seven groups of people:

1. State Department of Education staff of five–this group would report directly to the State Superintendent. One person would be the Director of the office; the second, third, and fourth would be persons with experience with younger children, older youth, and those in between respectively; the fifth person would have primary responsibility for developing the community education component of the program.

   A word of explanation for the latter is appropriate. As stated earlier, schooling is the responsibility of the wider community. Thus, we will be asking support, involvement, placement opportunities and a host of other things from that community. It is quite important that the schools, in turn, be prepared to share their facilities, expertise and resources with that wider community. The present school-community program and the other Community Education activities of the Division of Instruction are a good beginning. I am simply proposing that we build on that beginning and integrate those efforts with Project Basic.

   The central office would coordinate the efforts of Project Basic. They would represent the glue as many are gathered in this effort.
2. Representatives of local systems–I propose that I select five systems, each of which would assign one staff person to work fulltime on Project Basic. The Department would pay the salaries of the people. The five systems would be representative. They would be chosen on the basis of pre-determined and announced criteria such as: (a) representativeness, geographically and demographically; (b) enthusiasm; (c) evidence of support from the business, labor, parent, and government communities of the system; and (d) previous involvement in similar issues.

   The five persons would spend most of the first part of the first year working as colleagues with the central office personnel and under the supervision of the Director. They would be full participants in the future conceptualization of process and direction, bringing the local system perspective to the deliberations. During the second part of the first year, they would spend most of their time back in their respective systems in dialogue with administrators, teachers, parents and community people regarding the work of the first part of the year.
3. County Superintendents–I propose to select four county superintendents who reflect the geographic and demographic diversity of the state to meet with me for a day each four to six weeks in a "shirt-sleeves" setting. They would constitute a major reference group as I give direction to the planning process envisioned.
4. Organization liaison–A group representative of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education, Maryland State Teachers Association, Maryland Congress of Parents and Teachers, and other appropriate organizations will be asked to meet regularly to share in the development of Project Basic.
5. Citizen Consultants–I propose to involve a substantial number of citizens to participate from the beginning in the formulation of Project Basic. They will be persons drawn from many walks of life who have practiced effective adulthood. They will include, for example, such individuals as craftspersons, politicians, homemakers, media people, businesspeople, athletes, musicians, artists. They will be drawn from counties throughout the state.

   I propose a role for them beyond mere reaction to a staff-submitted proposal. I want

to ask a broadly constituted group of citizens what they feel is the necessary range of minimum competencies for effective adulthood.

One approach that deserves consideration beyond the group of selected citizens is to explore with media people the use of the media to ask the citizens of Maryland generally what they consider the essential competencies.

6. State government liaison—I propose asking the agency heads of such Departments as Health and Mental Hygiene, Human Resources, Natural Resources, Employment and Social Services, Economic and Community Development, and Agriculture to select a deputy or other ranking person each to meet at appropriate times throughout the year. Such a committee would explore the various ways in which their agencies and programs could assist us and we them.
7. Department staff—While the central office staff will be the primary Department staff support to Project Basic, there will be numerous times during the first year where they will be required to call on the expertise of other Department personnel. It will require considerable inter-divisional activity and the strong support of the Assistant Superintendents. With that in mind, I will meet with the Assistant Superintendents regularly as they will constitute a primary reference group in the development of Project Basic.

There will be several primary activities following completion of the first draft of the Guide. The five locally selected people would return to their local counties, although their salaries would continue to be paid by the Department. Similar persons would be selected by the four superintendents who had been meeting with me regularly. In those nine counties, County Comprehensive Guides would be prepared using a process similar to the one used at the state level previously.

The focus of attention would, of course, be on the "how to" section of the Guide since it is in that area that the resources vary so widely among counties. Attention to the competency definition section would not be precluded. Indeed, counties would be encouraged to advise us on changes which should be made. When the County Comprehensive Guides are completed, a plan of action will be developed to begin implementation in the third year. Throughout this process the central office staff plus other departmental personnel would be available to assist local systems.

At the end of two years, we will have developed the basis for initial implementation in year three and continuing thereafter. The specifics for such implementation will be part of the effort during the first two years. While obviously it is not possible to identify the precise nature of the activities beginning in the third year, there are several principles that will be at work. First, the initial steps toward implementation will be broadly enough based to allow us to determine Project Basic's strengths and weaknesses to that point. Sometimes new efforts are so narrow in scope that one cannot know whether its success of failure is dependent on a single individual or set of circumstances that will not occur again. In this instance we will be seeking the best strategies to make the Mission of Schooling real. Thus, it must go beyond the typical small experimental or pilot project effort. Second, the experience will provide a basis for further revision in the compentency definitions. Third, initial implementation will begin to demonstrate resource needs, how resources must be allocated, what new resources are necessary. Fourth, the effort will illuminate further teacher training needs. Fifth, it will allow us to begin to validate new evaluation procedures.

Other Educational Programs Deserving Priority Attention

Project Basic: Learning for Effective Adulthood is addressed to the full range of schooling. Nevertheless, there are seven areas of educational programming which deserve special attention, though all relate directly to Project Basic. They are:

A. Project Star—This effort is well under way at the Board's initiative and with hard work on

the part of the staff. Indeed, if Project Star is as successful as we hope, it would become the primary piece of the "how to" section of the basic skills reading component of Project Basic.

B. Disruptive youth program–There is a one dimension of a program for disruptive youth which is missing from the efforts presently under way. At least, it does not play a prominent role. The majority of drop-outs and disruptive youth suffer from boredom and/or failure. Disruption or leaving school is frequently a reaction to these conditions. One significant strategy for overcoming both is increased community based learning opportunities.

At the moment the overwhelming majority of learning experiences take place in the classroom. That means we rely largely on success or failure to occur there. (I set aside for the moment the fact that community based learning is also important to competency development for all students not just those who are disruptive.) All students do not learn best in the same way or in the same place. It is not enough to say that a student must adjust to the setting we provide. We must search for that place of learning which will provide success. That place for many is outside the classroom in part. Thus I propose to add attention to this strategy to the present framework of our disruptive youth program.

C. Early Childhood Education–We educators argue with one another about nearly everything. However, one point on which there is nearly unanimity is that what takes place in a child's life between the ages of zero and five is more important to the child's growth and development than any other single period. Yet schools do not become involved with a child or his/her parents until the end of that time. That does not make sense. I recommend the following activities to address this serious question:

1. A comprehensive report be submited to the Governor through the State Board of Education recommending a state government strategy for addressing the needs of young children. The only bias that I would want to inject into the proposal from the beginning is that the emphasis be on what the state can do to strengthen families in their parenting role rather than on programs for children themselves. There is much evidence that the strains and pressures experienced by the family in the past quarter of a century have contributed to such phenomena as the increased divorce rate, reliance on schools and other institutions to do what families formerly did in the training of children, and child abuse. Thus, our focus should be on strengthening family effort.
2. Development of parent-education programs–There are a number of ways in which the Department can begin immediately to strengthen parent education efforts. They include:
   a. Increased attention to in-service training in the use of parent-teacher conferences for parent education.
   b. Development of programs for the parents of pre-school children.
   c. Increased attention to parenting programs for high school students–Last year 210,000 girls 17 or under gave birth in the United States. One in ten 17 year old girls is a mother and 16 percent of these girls have two children.

      In recommending parenting education in the high schools (and it is already underway to some extent in many), I do not approve or disapprove of young parenthood. I am simply stating facts and suggesting it is not adequate to say those young families are someone else's problems. Moreover, parenting education should not be limited to or even primarily for the person who is already a parent. Many more youth will face the questions of parenthood shortly after graduation. Surely, good parenting is necessary to effective adulthood.

d. We should increase the parenting offerings of our adult education programs. That would represent an important contribution within the framework of Community Education.

3. We should carefully review the experience here and in other states of the value of full day five year old kindergarten.

During the months immediately ahead we can expect initiatives in the early childhood area by the Carter-Mondale administration, supplemented with initiatives by individual senators and congresspeople. All of our initiatives in this area should take account of federal activity and should inform us so that we can influence the shape of federal initiatives.

D. Equal Opportunity—Absent equal opportunity all else we do is tainted. While much progress has been made, constant vigilance is necessary. Project Basic, at its roots, is an equal opportunity program because it will spell out what the fundamental competencies of a good education are and will represent a declaration on the part of the State Board that we intend to provide the learning experiences necessary to every child.

E. Corrections education—As a result of legislation passed in 1976, the Department has increased responsibility for the education of prison inmates. If we are to meet that responsibility we must give it special consideration. The legislation calls for a report to the General Assembly regarding the joint plan of the Department of Education and the Division of Corrections.

F. In-service Education—There are approximately 45,000 teachers presently in teaching in Maryland. The focus of teacher training efforts should not exclude pre-service training. But with a minimal turn-over rate among present teachers, the primary focus should be in-service education.

Conclusion

We face the challenge of providing equal access to a schooling system which satisfies the discussed criteria at costs which the taxpayers of Maryland can afford. It will require our focusing attention on the people of this state rather than the sometimes traditional areas of turfdom and other excesses that get in the way of quality education. Many school districts are already engaged in important ways in results-oriented education. The State Board and the Department of Education should take full advantage of that experience. They must assume a posture of leadership but make no pretense of dictatorship, benevalent or otherwise. I firmly believe that the State Board, local Boards of Education, superintendents, teachers, parents and others are fully capable of exercising that leadership. And I believe the legislature is anxious that we assume it rather than being called upon to impose it. Above all, perhaps, the too often abandoned virtue of mutual trust must be present.

West Virginia
Plan for Community Education

by West Virginia Department of Education
Bureau of Vocational, Technical & Adult Education
Community Education Office

Definition

The purpose of Community Education is to open the schools, supported by public tax dollars, in an effort to serve the total community with activities, programs and services provided in cooperation with all governmental and service organization. Local community advisory councils are utilized to identify activities they believe will meet the needs of all ages and interests in the community.

Introduction

Community Education is a concept that has developed public involvement and support for public schools throughout the nation. Beginning in Flint, Michigan forty years ago, the concept has been so successful that over eight hundred school systems in the United States have adopted it as a basic operational philosophy.

Community Education involves all of the people of a community by opening the schools in the afternoons, during the evenings and even on weekends to community activities for all ages and interests. It involves the school and the entire community in activities that result in the school becoming a relevant part of their personal lives.

It is the intent of the State Board of Education to offer the people of West Virginia an opportunity to develop the Community Education philosophy as a guiding force for an improved educational system through community involvement.

Rationale

In the early days of public education in West Virginia, the local schools were looked upon and used by the people of the community as a hub around which a wide range of community services could be provided.

In essence, a partnership in social development between youth and adult evolved whereby the community-owned school facility was used not only for educational activities, but also for cultural, social, recreational, governmental, health, and other activities as well.

Year after year, the communities and schools grew further apart. The schools became

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*Excerpt from West Virginia *Manual of Operations for Community Education*, 1977.

institutions given totally to children and youth in the compulsory school-age, and usually only school-developed educational activities were allowed. Few provisions were made for externally-originated educational, cultural, social or recreational opportunities for school children, for community or adult involvement.

The adult segment, those who did not fit the compulsory school-age range, at the same time increasingly developed their own separate specialized institutions. As a result, education became textbook-teacher-student oriented rather than community-related.

Frequently, vandalism and civil unrest are vented toward the local school. While this aggression may be aimed at the system in general, the damage to facilities and to the future lives of some individuals is appalling. Sociologists generally agree that both youth and adults often feel isolated from the school and are not satisfied with its ability to related to many of their special needs.

Increasingly, neighborhood residents, including parents of school-age children, have pulled away from the school, voiced criticism of the school and expressed opposition to public school expenditures. Yet many professional educators suggest that in order for the school to best serve the child, this trend must be reversed and the school must, as much as possible, relate to the total patronage and family as well as community attitudes and ideas.

The 1972 President's Commission on School Finance suggested that Community Schools are a means of developing a closer linkage between school children, parents and other citizens in the educational community. Involvement of community residents in programs in which they are highly interested and frequently have a voice in developing naturally "bridges the gap" between school and community. In addition, it fosters positive feelings toward supporting education.

Community Education is a process by which we can enhance cooperation with other community and social agencies and can provide maximum utilization of the tax dollar. The Community Education concept is based on the fundamental premise that the public schools belong to all the people, from pre-schoolers through senior citizens. By means of Community Schools, local resources can be harnessed to provide a forum as a means to work with community problems while bringing back a sense of community identity whereby adults, students and community members can work, play and learn together.

Demands have been placed on education that can, in most instances, best be provided at the neighborhood level. Some of these demands are the result of adult illiteracy; unemployment in the urban centers, as well as rural areas; need for a more skilled work force by public and private industry; need for adult education in the areas of citizenship, drug-alcohol abuse, consumer affairs, safe and economical driving, wiser energy consumption; health and other problems. Increasingly, communities are faced with the problems of the aged. The Community Education concept with its emphasis on all citizens, young and old, offers a promise of meeting these unique educational and social needs.

The neighborhood school facilities are owned by the community. They may be used for a whole range of community activities which support, strengthen and augment the basic program for which the educational system exists. The Community School expands the role of the school from a formal learning center for the young, operating six hours a day, five days a week, thirty-nine weeks a year, to a total community opportunity center for the young and old, operating virtually around the clock throughout the calendar year. Summarily, it relates the operation of the school to those particular needs of that community.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1.0 To provide and develop a sense of community or neighborhood in the areas served by the Community Schools.

- 1.1 Assist in the development of communications between the citizens and the schools, local government units and business and industry.
  - 1.1.1 Provide the proper training and information with citizens and school personnel directly involved in order to promote a better understanding of Community Education.
- 1.2 Assume a leadership role in community development.
- 1.3 Encourage citizen participation in community affairs.
- 1.4 Cooperatively involve labor, business and industry, churches, city and county governments, and other educational and social agencies in the Community Education program.
- 1.5 Organize and strengthen the local Community School advisory committees and insure participation by a cross section of people including youth, young adults, parents, senior citizens, and representatives from various social service agencies.
- 1.6 Develop Community Education programs that permit total community involvement.

Goal 2.0 To develop and implement a sound Community Education program in all school areas.

- 2.1 Develop a balanced program for neighborhood areas as suggested by people through surveys, observation and staff input from community agencies, organizing specific programs in the following areas:
  - 2.1.1 Education

    Enrichment classes, drug education, health and safety education, pre-school and early childhood experiences, teenage and young adult activities, adult and senior citizen activities, physical education and fitness opportunities, vocational and business education, adult basic education, tutorial and compensatory education, education for upgrading job skills.
  - 2.1.2 Recreation
    - a. Provide recreation programs as requested by the citizens in such areas as arts and crafts, photography, ceramics, etc.
    - b. Cooperate with city and county recreation agencies in expanding recreational opportunities in order that all citizens may participate year-round.
  - 2.1.3 Cultural and Fine Arts
    - a. Make available cultural and fine arts programs.
    - b. Provide means by which area residents can attend and/or participate in cultural and fine arts programs.

Goal 3.0 To promote the use of school facilities and personnel for the provision of services and programs in order to improve the educational, vocational, cultural, and social life of the neighborhood in which the Community School is located.

- 3.1 Increase the school facility and building usage by opening them more hours and acting as a catalyst to bring more citizens to use local resources.
- 3.2 Conduct Community Education on a year-round basis.
- 3.3 Provide locations in the Community Schools or other local facilities to pursue the activities of Community Education.
- 3.4 Engage in cooperative efforts with other social service agencies.

Goal 4.0 To bring together all resources (federal, state, county, local, and other) in developing and operating a comprehensive program.

- 4.1 Work toward having Community Education substantially supported by the local community after a reasonable period of time.
- 4.2 Request the assistance of local governmental agencies, civic organizations, business and industry, and private foundations in the support of Community School programs.

Goal 5.0 To evaluate the Community Education program constantly in terms of meeting public needs.

- 5.1 Base assessment upon effectiveness of programs in meeting needs and demands of citizens in the community.
- 5.2 Evaluate the Community Education staff and staff development programs.
- 5.3 Include also school administration, teaching and other instructional staff in the program evaluation.
- 5.4 Include long range planning of the county's Community Education program in the evaluation process.
- 5.5 Involve the participation of the West Virginia Community Education Advisory Committee in the planning and evaluation process.

Proclamation

The West Virginia State Board of Education affirms the role of the local school as a Community Education center for people of all ages. Schools are a common denominator of all people; therefore, school boards, administrators, faculties, and staffs are challenged to work in full concert with other governmental and community agencies and institutions, including the total community, as well as local neighborhood residents, to provide and support the provisions of the total range of educational, cultural, social, health and recreational services and activities appropriate to the needs of the community and the resources of our society.

"Our Schools" as Compared to "Those Schools"

by J. Frank Yeager
Superintendent, Durham County Schools
North Carolina

A Growing Loss of Public Confidence

For several years, the general public has criticized many of the nation's public schools for various reasons, some legitimate, others not; the result has been a growing loss of public confidence. Failure to reelect board of education members, non-renewal of superintendents' contracts, failure to pass needed bond issues, lack of community participation in the schools, deterioration of a school-supportive attitude by parents and failure of elected officials to finance public education adequately, are several examples indicative of the problem. Unfortunately, many of us (administrators and teachers) are still "circling the wagons" against the attack on the public schools. This defensiveness is self defeating. It legitimizes blaming others instead of searching inward for solutions to problems. Following this same line of reasoning, it is easy to see why educators should say "we have met the enemy and he is us."

The Core Problem

When discussing the public schools, the lay public in most areas of the country generally refer to the schools as "those schools" or "that school" as opposed to the more possessive "our schools" or "my school." This mode of reference reveals the *core problem* which must be addressed if we are to restore confidence in and support for public education. A citizen's behavior toward the schools, whether in voting for a bond issue or in becoming directly involved in working in a classroom, is directly related to the individual's perception of the schools.[1] Obviously, perceptions are sometimes distorted and often incomplete but it serves little purpose for educators to "moan and groan" about being misunderstood; we must work to change the perception. We must do our best to inform our public accurately and, in so doing, help them feel a part *of* the schools rather than apart *from* them.

Considerable research in community and organizational development disciplines is available to support the concept that a feeling of "ownership" affects one's commitment to a decision, concept or group.[2] We need to make "those schools" become "our schools." But how do we go about restoring lay citizens' ownership of the public schools?

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[1]William T. Powers, *Behavior: The Control of Perception* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1973), pp. 41-55, 169, 261-272.

[2]Charles Cofer and M. H. Appley, *Motivation: Theory and Research* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1964), p. 781. *General Mills Annual Report* (Minneapolis: General Mills, Inc., 1966), pp. 19-20. Albert T. Poffenberger, *Psychology in Advertising* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1932), p. 17.

Examination of past years when there was considerably more public support for education sheds light on how to address the problem. Public schools formerly were centers for many activities other than formal education. Social and community activities were common. In recent years, external forces, as well as some internal forces in education, have tended to restrict school utilization. As schools became larger and more comprehensive through consolidation and as some children were bused out of their neighborhoods for the purpose of desegregation, individual and community identity with specific schools diminished.

Restoring Community Ownership

The Durham County Schools in North Carolina have attempted to restore community identity with and ownership of the public schools by pursuing a number of different process approaches. One of the most effective is the operation of selected schools outside of normal school hours and during the summer to carry on community identified programs. Since our initial efforts, forces at work within Durham County indicate a steady movement toward the goals of confidence and support. Easy passage of a state bond issue for capital improvement, considerable lay participation in public meetings to find solutions to problems, active lay advisory committees at individual schools, increased financial support from elected officials, volunteer assistance, a supportive press, a board of education in which all candidates took a positive stance, and overwhelming passage of a school supplemental tax increase are definite signs that there is growing public support for our school system. This attitude can be directly linked to an outreach effort which included opening up the schools to the general public for greater community utilization.

A pro-school advantage was gained in Durham partially because school leaders early voiced their willingness to seek ways to work to restore public confidence. Lay leaders were encouraged enough by the schools' receptive stance to come forward and cooperative planning was begun. It appears that all educators and supporters of public education have a vested interest in moving in this direction if we want to restore public confidence in and support for public education.

Too many times educators attempt to communicate to the public by using education jargon such as "community schools." We fail to create the enthusiasm and understanding that is needed to sustain a good idea. In Durham County, we have tried to avoid this mistake by talking about *benefits* and individuals' *vested interests*, as opposed to intangible concepts with no personal definition.[3] In the business world, successful salespeople have known for years that they don't sell products, but that they sell the product's "benefits" for the customer. The focus of a successful sale is the customer, not the product. Thus, from the beginning three years ago, we have stressed meeting the specific needs of our diverse population while saving taxpayers' money through better utilization of our resources, including facilities.

Cooperating Education Systems

In North Carolina, the community college-technical institute system is legally responsible for all adult education. The public schools have no responsibility in this area. Savings to the taxpayer through the use of public school facilities for adult education come about by not having to build additional facilities for community colleges or technical institutes to conduct adult programs. An educational benefit is that participation in adult programs has been significantly increased by taking the instructional programs closer to the lay citizens. Amost 2,000 adults enrolled in evening courses

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[3]Douglas McGregor, *The Professional Manager* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 73. Douglas McGregor, "The Human Side of Enterprise," *Motivation and Control in Organizations*, eds., Gene Dalton and Paul Lawrence, (Homewood, Illinois: Richard Irwin, Inc. and The Dorsey Press, 1971), pp. 304-312.

within the public schools of Durham County during this past year. A corresponding taxpayers' saving in Durham County has come about through a closer working relationship between Durham Technical Institute and the public schools. This year, for the first time, cooperative effort is permitting selected, advanced, vocational students in their high school senior year to take courses at the local technical institute for full credit. These courses can be counted as college credit and, at the same time, as credit toward a hign school diploma. By working together, the public schools and Durham Technical Institute have agreed on curriculum offerings which have improved the course continuity between the two institutions, thus educationally benefitting our students as well as financially benefiting parents.

Programs, Staffing and Financial Support

Adult programs offered in the schools range from vocational, personal interest and basic education courses to recreational training. Summer camps for our youth have also been included. Lay boards at five different locations in each section of the County independently make the final decision on the direction of their regional program. One full-time employee and five part-time employees are funded by the County Commissioners to assist the lay boards and to help coordinate the programs. Each part-time coordinator works under the supervision of the respective principals of the five schools that serve as community centers.

The county commissioners, who fund the salaries for these individuals with local taxpayers' money, decided to make the investment after the program originally started three and one-half years ago through a grass roots movement of some key local citizens, technical institute staff and public school officials. Original motivation centered on finding outlets for senior citizens' interests and on developing alternative programs for school-aged students. Durham County lacked a county recreational and decentralized adult education program, thus the county commissioners realized that community needs could be met better with a relatively small sum of money invested in our program. The amount of hard money ($29,535) put into the program this year by the Commissioners has been far exceeded in the contributions ($120,689) from local agencies, private foundations, and by the dollar value of volunteer services.

The program has continued to grow in the past three years of operation with the paid staff and lay boards providing the direction. This growth was assisted by the awarding of a Community Education Grant in the amount of $79,550 from the U. S. Office of Education. Certainly, problems have developed at each location, but we have not found that any problem to date has been insurmountable.

Recently, three incidents highlighted the effects of the Durham County effort. A well-thought-of state political figure approached an adjacent school board and requested that they start a program similar to Durham County's. This board in turn instructed their administrative staff to proceed, and they now have two centers in operation. Also, the U. S. Office of Education's awarding of a community school grant to Durham County to enlarge and improve the program was significant. This grant was highly competitive and Durham County received the only grant awarded in North Carolina. In addition, Durham Technical Institute officials have advised that they are now receiving many additional requests for joint programs between other public school systems and the Technical Institute.

Principles for Restoring Community Ownership

The principles that we have developed are the following:

1. Before lay leaders will come forth, public school leadership must be willing to take the first

step by demonstrating a willingness to cooperate with the community for greater school utilization.

2. After the initial informative stage, lay leaders must assume direction of the program so as to ensure broad community ownership.
3. A minimum amount of money is needed to employ program administrators to tie things together and to coordinate activities with the school and community leaders involved.
4. During both the initial and developmental stages, programs must reflect the broad interests of the public and those educators at the involved schools so as to ensure full participation and cooperation.
5. Appealing to the vested interests of elected officials and institutional leaders appears to be the most promising way to gain human resources and financial support. Benefits–financial, political, educational and otherwise–will far outweigh the small investment required.

For educators, it's easy to become so immersed in details that we forget that the word *public* comes before *education.* The public is, in every sense, the foundation and reason for our educational system. Schools must seek ways for the public to become a familiar and vital part of education once again. Community education may not be the total answer, but for us it's been one method to improve our relationship with the public and to start a process of building a coordinated and comprehensive educational system to serve the needs of *all* people. In Durham County, "those schools" are becoming "our schools."

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Education and Community

by Thomas E. Truitt
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Recall of Educational Events

My fondest recollection of my high school economics/sociology class is that I sat behind the homecoming queen. But I also remember something else about that class. As a means of encouraging sensitivity to the events of the world, the first ten or fifteen minutes of class each day were devoted to discussion of current events. The excitement of one particular discussion still lingers in the back of my mind.

On this particular fall day in 1957 the discussion centered around the launching of a space satellite by the Soviet Union. I remember the excitement of the teacher and my classmates as they considered the possibilities of "Sputnik." My failure to share in that excitement is one of the reasons I remember that day.

As a high school senior I could not share in the excitement because my limited vision rendered me incapable of understanding the scientific and technological importance of the event. I could not imagine the implications of this "Sputnik" for communication and space travel to the same degree as my classmates.

Today, from the perspective of a school superintendent, I look back on the launching of the Soviet *Sputnik* as a watershed event for public education, and this is the second reason why I remember that high school class discussion. There is little comfort in the knowledge that neither my teacher, nor my classmates, perceived the significance of the event for education.

Although the day after the launching was too close to the event to recognize its potential impact on public education, the weeks and months which followed brought a new wave of criticism for the nation's schools. The national failure to be first in the field of space was blamed on the schools. Newspaper, magazine, radio and television appeals for strong science and mathematics programs were made, while programs of fine arts and socialization came under attack.[1]

While the public schools have had periods of criticism in the past, the launching of the Soviet Sputnik and the subsequent public reaction is viewed as a watershed event since it initiated a period of unrest and dissatisfaction which has continued to the present. The event once again demonstrated the responsiveness of the schools to the public, for increased emphasis was placed on science and mathematics as a direct response to public reaction. But, even though the United States has replaced the U. S. S. R. as the leader in space, the public schools have not been credited for our nation's successes to the same extent they have been blamed for our shortcomings. Today the public mood is still critical of education.

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[1] Ralph L. Pounds and James R. Bryner, *The School in American Society* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 74.

Even though there is considerable criticism of public schools, the system of education still represents a major investment by the American people. Today over 45 million students are being taught by over two million teachers at an estimated cost of $71 billion.[2] And, while unquestioning belief and faith in education has not recovered from the Sputnik incident, there exists in this country a strong tradition of support for public education and the potential for restoring public confidence in our educational system. Restoration of public confidence should be a major goal of professional educators. The key to achieving this goal lies in understanding the forces which have impacted education during the post-Sputnik years and being willing to consider solutions in light of these forces.

Toffler, in his popular book *Future Shock*, described the shock of rapid and uncontrolled change which is affecting people in today's society. While institutions such as the schools may appear impervious to changes in society, the environments in which the public school must operate have been changing rapidly. The inability of the schools to accurately perceive and deal with these changes in the environment is a major problem.

Power Shift Away from Local Control

One writer has suggested that the 1970's will be called the "decade of political reformation in American education."[3] The reformation taking place is primarily one of a shift in power from school boards and administrators to other groups.

Clearly, there has been a shift of power from the local to the state and federal levels related to changes in the financing of education. Originally schools were financed by local property taxes. Expanding enrollments, higher salaries, and inflation have resulted in a 261 percent increase in the cost of education for kindergarten through the twelfth grade from the year 1960 to 1970. With local property taxes no longer adequate, school boards turned to the state and federal governments to take up the slack. Boards obtained additional funding; they sacrificed control.[4]

In addition to changes in the finances of education, many states have adopted educational standards or accountability programs which have the effect of constraining the local division from exercising prerogatives it formerly had. The federal government has further restricted local control through court decisions, legislative acts, and administrative regulations.

Another factor which has eroded local administrative power to control schools is growing community pluralism. The homogeneous, middle class community power structure has been replaced by a complex group of small independent community groups with special interests in the educational system. The instability of such a political structure results in a further erosion of administrative control.

A more direct attack on administrative control over the schools has come from the organization and unionization of teachers. Through the process of negotiation and grievance teachers have done much to wrest administrative control from school boards and superintendents. Having been successful in collective bargaining, teachers have begun functioning in the political arena in an attempt to exercise more control over the system.

The student rights movement has made an additional contribution in the shift of power away

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[2]National Center for Educational Statistics, Education Division, *The Condition of Education*, 75th edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1975), pp. 40-42 and 58-60.

[3]Lee H. Hansen, "Political Reformation in Local Districts," *Educational Leadership* XXXIV, No. 2 (November, 1976), p. 90.

[4]Lee K. Davis, "The School Board's Struggle to Survive," *Educational Leadership*, XXXIV, No. 2 (November, 1976), p. 98.

from local school boards and administrators. Due process mechanisms, students' bills of rights, search and seizure constraints, and control of student records have eroded administrative control over students.[5]

The changing and expanding role of the schools is the final factor in the power shift in education. Years ago there was a simpler time when the school curriculum was designed to accomplish an uncomplicated task; there was general agreement on the goals of the school; teachers were hired to teach courses designed to achieve these goals; and students spent the day learning what the teachers told them to learn.[6] In recent years society has tried to use the schools as a vehicle to cope with segregation, human relations, the environmental crises, vandalism, smoking and cancer, sexual naivete and immorality, population control, and early childhood care. As a result, schools are viewed as tools for helping society cope with its problems and as a source of power for those who wish to reform society.[7]

Results of Power Shifts

As a result of these forces, the viability of local control of education faces a serious challenge. The shift of power from local school boards and administrators to other groups has been traumatic for local educators. This has led to a feeling of helplessness and a "let Washington do it" attitude.

In this climate there are those who maintain that local control should be a thing of the past. It has been suggested that rapid transportation and easy communication require a national curriculum and national educational policies. Yet the traditional belief in the worth of the individual requires that we seek to make education responsive and sensitive to the unique needs of individuals and of individual communities. The concept of community education has the potential to help us achieve this responsiveness and sensitivity.

The potential of community education will be realized only if those who promote the concept will avoid two major syndromes–the tendencies to label and to offer panaceas.

Labeling Syndrome

Labeling is an obsession in education. Educators have been known to argue for hours on whether a child was a "slow learner," "educationally deprived," "culturally disadvantaged," "handicapped," or "retarded." A different type of child might be labeled "academically talented," "gifted," or an "overachiever." The point is that often times energies are directed toward labeling, rather than educating, students. The main purpose of the labeling is to separate and categorize.

Children are not the only subject of labels: ideas are treated in a similar manner with equally unproductive results. As the concept of community education becomes part of the content for more and more graduate courses in education, there is a danger that it may become less useful. The process of defining a concept has the effect of limiting and restricting the concept as it is forced neatly into a tight, semantic category. This is inevitable with a concept such as community education; for definitions are static, while the concept is dynamic.

As noted earlier, the major purpose of labeling is to separate and categorize. This results in education and community education. Not only do we have separate definitions for education and community education, but we have special community education associations, community education councils, and community education coordinators which are separate from, but added to,

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[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91

[6] A. W. Sturgis, "Forces Influencing the Curriculum," *Educational Leadership*, XXXIV, No. 1 (October, 1976), p. 40.

[7] Hansen, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

the existing educational structure. The separatism of the community education movement has been promoted by "community educators" and is a basic mistake for it places community education in a context outside of education. The end result is that community education becomes an add-on program taking place after school hours with a heavy emphasis on recreation.

It is not helpful to separate community education from education, for education generally should be oriented to the community. Many of the ideas emphasized by the community education movement can contribute to the improvement of education.

Panacea Syndrome

The second syndrome to be avoided by community education is panacea packaging and promotion. The history of education in the post-Sputnik era might be viewed as a search for panaceas as educators have eagerly embraced a variety of proposed cure-alls. Team teaching, non-gradedness, open education, teaching machines, computer assisted instruction, behavioral objectives, management by objectives, individualized and humanized instruction, and career education are just a few of the organizational and methodological ideas that have been offered as "the solution" for the ills of education. There are those who would like to make community education the latest panacea; this must be avoided.

Community Education Emphasizes Involvement

The rise of community education is related to the prevailing practice in the majority of American school districts since World War II to curtail opportunties for lay participation and to confine decisions exclusively to the realm of the professional. This exclusivity has decreased the sense of ownership on the part of parent and lay constituencies.[8] In many communities "our" schools have become "those" schools. The concept of community education reemphasizes the benefit of community and lay involvement in the public school system through the use of community advisory councils and through bringing community resources and the schools closer together.

While public involvement in goal setting has been given lip service, it has seldom been practiced because of the difficulty involved in trying to communicate with large numbers of people.[9] In Virginia public involvement in education has been mandated since 1972 through the state's Standards of Quality program. This program requires that each school division involve the community in developing a six-year plan which must include:

1. The measurable objectives of the school division
2. An assessment of the extent to which the objectives are being achieved
3. Strategies for achieving the objectives.

Each school in the state must also involve representatives of its community in developing an annual plan for that school.

In addition to parent and lay persons, involvement in setting and assessing goals should be extended to another group—the students. Students can be involved in division and school planning councils. In Danville students have served as members of these planning groups since 1972 and have made valuable contributions. But, as pointed out by Tyler, this involvement must be continued in the classroom with the ultimate purpose of having the student assume an active role in his education.

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[8]Conrad F. Toepfer, Jr., "Will the Real Curriculum Players Step Forth?" *Educational Leadership*, XXXIV, No. 1 (October, 1976), p. 14.

[9]Ronald Brandt, "Who Should Be Involved in Curriculum Development?" *Educational Leadership*, XXXIV, No. 1 (October, 1976), p. 11.

To maximize learning, students should perceive what behavior they are expected to learn and should feel confident that they can carry these learning tasks through successfully.[10] Student involvement in planning their own education leads to more motivated students.

In addition to increased motivation by students and commitment by parents and the lay community, involvement by the community results in more community resources being open and accessible. The need for strengthening out-of-school resources and helping students deal with the non-school environment was inferred by Tyler based on the following generalizations:

1. While the time available to the school has remained relatively constant, the time given to education by parents, community agenices, and work settings has been greatly reduced.
2. An adequate educational system in a modern society must include experiences that take place *outside* the school, which is where young people spend most of their time.[11]

The bringing of outside resources into the schools adds richness, relevance, and reality to the school program. In Danville we are finding that community people are willing and anxious to become involved in the school. A recent project of two of our sixth grade teachers illustrates this point.

These teachers had participated in a local in-service workshop on the free enterprise system. The workshop was an outgrowth of a community concern for the teaching of the free enterprise system and was a cooperative effort of a local private college, the area Chamber of Commerce, and the school system. As an outgrowth of this workshop, these teachers developed a student project designed to give students an understanding of the free enterprise system. This project was the production of Christmas ornaments.

The students formed a corporation, set up an assembly line to produce the product, and marketed their product. During the incorporation phase a local lawyer visited with the classes and discussed the legal aspects of forming a corporation. Following the visit by the lawyer, a banker discussed the financial considerations of starting a business. When it came time to set up the assembly line, the plant manager of a major industry in the area provided the class with expert advice on production. Finally, the class made arrangements with local businesses to serve as outlets for their product.

While the project described above was a valuable experience for the Danville sixth grade students, it is not possible for schools to provide the full range of learning experiences needed by students. Not only must community resources be brought into the school, but students must go out into the community. Students need opportunities to become involved in work experiences in the community. These experiences can be furnished by business, industry, agriculture, health agencies, civil service, and social agencies. It should be the role of the school to seek out these opportunities, organize them for effective and sequential learning, and supervise them to assure that educational values are being attained by students.[12]

Community education is not going to solve the problems of education; it is not a panacea. But community education is more than opening the buildings at night and at other times when traditionally they have been closed. Community education serves an important function in reminding us of the interdependent of the schools and the community. As the schools return to the concept of serving the community, public support and confidence in schools will increase.

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[10] Ralph W. Tyler, "Two New Emphases in Curriculum Development," *Educational Leadership*, XXXIV, No. 1 (October, 1976), p. 63.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Ibid.*

Two Approaches to Community Education

by Michael V. Woodall
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Community education has recently become a popular movement in public education. Certainly it is an appealing idea which tends to sell itself.

The growing support of community education will probably continue; and at this time, the current economic scene appears to be its greatest hurdle in being fully implemented across the country.

Basic Elements in a Community Education Program

Like any social movement on a wide scale, the community education movement is subject to a wide variety of interpretations. Some descriptions tend to be philosophical or goal statements, and others tend to be operational descriptions.

Probably most people gain their contact with community education through its various, but famous, operational features. The feature of expanded use of school buildings and grounds is very significant. It has probably been the major springboard to initiation. Another feature has been the need for coordination of the various programs and services in the community. Slower in acceptance has been the provision of health services. The opportunity to physically move a myriad of governmental agency offices to its citizens has been espoused. Strong interest has been given to the mutual provision of educational and recreational services.

The most useful goal description of community education for me is stated by Hughes. He says that the school may serve a four-fold role which is:

1. An educational center where children and adults have optimum opportunities for study and learning;
2. A neighborhood center for cultural and recreational activities;
3. A center for social services; and
4. A center of neighborhood and community life assisting citizens in the study and solution of neighborhood problems.[1]

These features or techniques have become the essence of community education for many of us.

Standard Approach

The standard approach in implementing a community education program has several distinct features. First of all, it requires the night, weekend, and summer use of school facilities. It suggests

[1] John R. Hughes, editor, The Community School and Its Concepts, 1972, ED 073531, ERIC Document Reproduction Service, P. O. Drawer O, Bethesda, Maryland 20014.

that either a full-time or part-time coordinator be employed. There should be clerical help, program funds, etc. It is implied that it should be located on one campus. There should be a totally coordinated effort among all governmental and service agencies at that campus. In addition, emphasis is given to the use of community resources in the regular day classes as well as the night classes.

It has been my privilege to participate in the establishment of three community school programs in a metropolitan school district utilizing the standard approach, which, in my opinion, is preferable, if a district has sufficient funds. In establishing these programs, it was necessary to create a receptivity upon the part of the school board to obtain the green light for implementation. Hence, it was a start from scratch. In order to whet the interest of the board, we selected two of its members who were highly involved in community cultural and recreational activities. They were paired with the central staff directors of physical education and fine arts, and flown to Flint, Michigan for an orientation session. That was a great experience for all four people.

Later, the board had the task of selecting a new superintendent and it chose one who had experience with, and an enthusiasm for, the community school movement. After the new superintendent arrived, the district physical education director was given the task of starting the district's program. We worked with various community agencies and particularly the recreational districts in outlining the funding, program essentials, etc. The recreational districts had strong input, as well as the high school building principal, in selecting the local community school directors.

Contracts were developed between the school and recreational districts to share salary and other costs. The school district received project approval from the State Department of Education to receive funding for adult educational programs. Recreational districts obtained land-leases from the school district and received special grants for the development of recreational facilities.

When the three community school directors were on the job, they tried to elicit use of their school buildings by community organizations which had already established ongoing programs. Using those programs, the existing recreational programs, and the state-supported adult education programs as a base, the communities were surveyed to determine additional needs for program expansion.

Since these initial programs were so successful, the district has continued to establish more. It is hoped that someday all seventeen high schools will be part of such a program.

Another Approach

I am currently involved with another approach to community education in a different school district. Because of several factors, it has a different administrative structure.

This community education program has been evolving for several years. In 1953, the State Legislature enacted a law requiring school districts to allow persons within the district to use the buildings at cost. In 1967, a small group of citizens formed an adult education association and requested the use of school buildings for community enrichment and cultural activities. The school board agreed to provide building usage and to furnish utility costs. That group of dedicated volunteers still organize and administer these programs in several of the district's six schools. Vital to the association's success is a highly motivated and untiring volunteer director. Last year the adult program drew a total course enrollment in excess of 1,200. More than half of these adult students came from twenty communities outside the school district, with some of those communities being more than thirty miles away. Included in this program are several graduate courses offered by two different colleges, over forty other courses, a lecture series, musical performances, and theatrical performances. Instructors' materials, or performance costs are usually borne by the student or the audience. Some of these costs are supported by special grants.

In this approach to community education, there has not been a definite starting point for the program. It was not a staff idea to be sold to the board. The origin came from various sources. Like the standard model, it requires the full use of school facilities. But, because the district is composed of one high school with a feeder middle school and four elementary schools, community education tends to be a district-wide endeavor instead of a single school program. The lack of funds also necessitates program administration by various district administrators and volunteers instead of employing a school coordinator. Although attempts have been made successfully, there has not been a broad involvement by other governmental agencies. This absence is probably due in part to the lack of district staff time. In addition, the use of community resources in the regular day classes has received a low priority.

Although the state has located some basic adult education courses in this district, its main program is administered in other districts in the two counties. The city and county governments have been using school facilities for recreational activities for years. They operate sports programs for people over eight years of age during the afternoons and on weekends. During the summer their programs are expanded with arts and crafts.

Lessons Learned

The administration of community education programs is both difficult and rewarding. It provides one with the opportunity to serve and assist communities in dealing with what they consider to be problems in ways which they deem most appropriate. My experiences over the past several years have led to several observations and conclusions:

1. A well-received community school program involving adults should expand support of the total school program because it broadens the number of families served by the school system.
2. A well-received community school program involving adults should expand support of the total school program because some adults only appreciate the school program's *direct* services to them.
3. The community's view of the role of the public schools must be taken into account in establishing a program, since some communities tend to be more conservative than others.
4. In determining the types of services to include in the program, various groups and many individuals must be consulted to determine their desires. This approach avoids wasted time, wasted money, and negative attitudes.
5. Program expansion should proceed carefully in order to allow for sensitivity to community priorities, adequate communication time, and adequate coordination time.
6. Program coordination with other governmental agencies often tends to be one of the major stumbling blocks. Suspicion, legal responsibility, and institutional pride must be dealt with. Constant communication, giving credit for other agency contributions, and understanding of their needs are essential to adequate coordination.
7. Program success depends upon the maintenance of good relations with the regular school staff of teachers, custodians, and principals.
8. A successful program depends upon a commitment to serve the needs of the community, as identified by the community, instead of a commitment to implement a preconceived program, model, or administrative structure.
9. It is necessary to thoroughly publicize the programs offered. Unlike regular school programs, there is not an automatic clientele. The fact that the programs are free or inexpensive does not create an interest in them, it only eliminates a barrier to those interested people wh difficulty in paying.

Community Education in the Suburbs: Does It Serve a Purpose?

by Warren J. Pace
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Jeffrey H. Orloff
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Robert G. Smiles
Coordinator, Community Education

Community Education offers the promise of improvement in the quality of life for communities across the country. But, are there settings where Community Education cannot be effective? Are there communities where the availability of key services and opportunities preclude the need and usefulness of a Community Education project?

These are some of the questions that were asked in 1974 when discussions about implementing a Community Education program in Falls Church, Virginia were begun. The smallest jurisdiction in the Washington, D. C., metropolitan area, Falls Church provides its 12,500 citizens with a vareity of municipal services, including its own school system.

Falls Church is located about eight miles from Washington, D. C., and is bounded on both sides by the large counties of Arlington and Fairfax. This metropolitan sprawl presented a number of conditions which had to be taken into consideration when the Community Education program in Falls Church was contemplated.

1. Recreational opportunities: Falls Church has long had an effective recreation department which has provided a comprehensive program for its citizens. In addition, a multitude of other recreational opportunities are available through many private facilities, colleges, agencies and neighboring recreational departments.
2. Adult education: Falls Church residents have access to two of the finest and largest adult education programs in the country–those of Arlington and Fairfax Counties.
3. Social services: There are a variety of social services available to Falls Church residents. These include both state and local programs in addition to some private agencies which provide services based on a person's financial ability to pay.
4. Other opportunities: In most large urban areas, there are a great number of services and programs available to the general population. Falls Church, as part of the Washington, D. C., metropolitan area, seems to be especially fortunate in this regard. There is a wealth of cultural, recreational, educational and related opportunities available.

Though the number of agencies represented in this example is somewhat extreme, the point is valid that there are an astonishing number of educational and enrichment opportunities for people in this area. For example, in 1975 the Falls Church schools were considering offering a course in Transactional Analysis for adults, a highly popular course in personal psychology. At that time at

least seven other agencies were also offering the course as adult enrichment. These included two neighboring adult education programs, the continuing education extension of the state university, the non-credit division of the community college, the local YWCA and the area Transactional Analysis Association.

Does, then, such a situation leave room for a school-based Community Education program? Is there a need for such a program when such comprehensive and diverse services already exist? Can it be justified? The answer to these questions in Falls Church has been a resounding "yes."

Community Education, after a year and a half of existence, is prospering and enjoying the support of the citizenry. Several reasons help to account for its success in a setting where it might not have been appropriate.

1. Sense of community: The fact that one's "own" schools are being used has also been significant in the success of community education in Falls Church. Citizens in Falls Church have long felt a sense of identity with the community and particularly with its schools. This feeling has led to many people supporting the Community Education programs.
2. Proximity: Proximity studies in adult education have shown that distance from the location of the class is a significant factor in enrollment. We have found this to be true in Falls Church as well. Information from surveys and comments from participants indicate that proximity is important. Some people state that they would not enroll in an identical program that was offered at a site not within the city limits. Others report that they choose courses based on the schools in which they are offered.
3. Special needs: Recognizing the considerable amount of duplication already in existence, we have attempted to develop programs around the needs of specific groups in our community. For example, a program on the financial aspects of retirement was held for those in that category, and because of the increasing number of single parents in this area, a program was developed to meet some of their needs.
4. Interagency cooperation: Because of the numerous agencies and organizations already involved in the community, cooperation between them and the Community Education program is essential. In Falls Church the Community Education Coordinator has worked closely with the recreation department, the local community college, the university extension and others in the development of programs. In addition, Falls Church has been a member of a regional council composed of members of area adult and continuing education programs. This council, suggested by the State Department of Education, has as its charge the development of responsive programs among its member organization.
5. Timing: A final reason that Community Education has been successful in Falls Church is that citizens were expressing concern about the future of their schools. With a dwindling school enrollment and a large percentage of families (one out of four) without school age children, the timing was right for Community Education and its new approaches to utilization of buildings and facilities. Recently, a comprehensive study of school facilities needs by a citizen task force resulted in some far-reaching recommendations about future building use. Community Education played a significant role in the task force's deliberations.

After a year and a half, Community Education has already made significant strides. Schools and their facilities are now open before and after school, evenings, weekends and summers. Pre-schoolers, senior citizens, and other groups are involved in school-based programs. The program is guided by an advisory council and has received substantial support from agencies, governmental bodies and the citizens at large.

Thus, with planning and foresight, Community Education in Falls Church has made vital contributions in a geographic area where, it was thought by some, not to be needed.

Cooperation—or—Conflict

by James C. Greiner
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There was a time when I was absolutely certain that the community education movement would sweep the country in a manner akin to Genghis Khan's conquest of Western Civilization or the Beatles sudden, total domination, over the world of music. The movement would open the doors of cooperation as it opened the doors of the old schoolhouse, and it would tear down the fences in peoples minds as it opened the gates to hitherto locked schoolyards. And all this would be accomplihsed, I reasoned, because IT WAS RIGHT! It was logical, practical, and it made sense; SO IT *HAD* TO BE.

Now, I am not the first rosy-eyed idealist to discover flecks of chaff in my grain. My own personal experience with community education as Director of Parks and Recreation in a small city has been a good one. Yet I continue to hear rumblings, louder and louder, among colleagues and professionals in other human service fields, concerning alleged and actual abuses and prostitution of the system as it *should* operate. At first I cast these dispersions aside as sour grapes or territorial grumblings from the "unenlightened."

But then names began to accompany comments, and many of them belonged to trusted and highly respected individuals. These were not run-of-the-mill, habitual complainers; and I found myself looking more closely at my own grainpile, lest I overlook some impurity hiding there.

There is now no question that at least part of my prophesy concerning community education has come true. The movement has spread more rapidly than even its most avid supporters believed possible. The very fact that community education is currently the center of such conversation and controversy among important persons in the leisure services and other human services fields is in itself a testimony to its sudden emergence as a powerful social force.

"Nothing can stop an idea whose time has come" is a phrase commonly heard in describing the growth of community education. There is no question that community education's time has come. The questions at this point seem to be (1) Will its coming be considered an opportunity or a threat by existing organizations? and (2) When it arrives, will it really resemble the product which has been sold to the community?

The answer to the first question depends upon whom you ask. I asked a great number of people in the preparation of this article, and received a myriad of answers. The National Recreation Association is the official voice of the parks, recreation, and conservation field. Officially, it has taken a cautious, wait and see attitude. NRPA's only public stand on the matter is contained in the July 1973 remarks of Executive Director Dwight F. Rettie to a Senate

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Subcommittee studying legislation for funding community education programs. Mr. Rettie expressed the following concerns:

> *It has been the real life experience of NRPA professionals, however, that effective implementation of these goals depends heavily on a spirit of positive cooperation between the several agencies and groups involved. A number of community-school programs have begun by immediately establishing recreation programs not in cooperation with local park and recreation agencies, but in competition with them. Thus instead of multiplying the possible services to a community, the program has immediately duplicated activities, reproduced facilities already available and replicated programs already being provided by trained recreation professionals.*

This statement gives some credence to reports that frequent and sometimes heated "discussions" occur among NRPA staff concerning the pros and cons of community education. One staffer related to me a particularly bitter personal experience which left him unalterably opposed to community education. In his case, the recreation department actually had less use of schools under community education than before the system was initiated. The community education program openly and aggressively competed with the established community recreation program. His view is shared by others in the National office.

Still others at NRPA feel the recreation profession must attach itself to the community education movement, or lose out on both funding and influence. They see logic in the system. The discussions continue with no apparent winner.

The battle at NRPA is but a carbon miniature of the conflict on a nationwide scale. Across the country YMCA, YWCA, scouting, extension, recreation, and other personnel in existing agencies are reacting with similarly divergent views.

At a recent conference, I listened to an Extension Youth Specialist from Flint, Michigan, who launched an attack on the cradle of community education with such intensity and ferocity, I expect it would have caused Mr. C. S. Mott, Sr. to sell his General Motors stock, were he alive to hear it.

Henry Swan, the well respected Director of the Phoenix, Arizona Parks and Recreation Department, recently reflected upon the threat community education has posed to some municipal agencies:

> *Community recreation is the 70 year old stepchild of local government. The "community school program" is the very recently acquired stepchild of education. Community recreation service professionals have watched as schools have stood empty and unused, as school bond elections have failed and as schools have lost contact with people. School administrators and board members have watched as community recreation and park bond elections succeeded and as the community recreation image has steadily improved. Community recreation service professionals have watched as school administrators grasped for lifesaving devices to regain their good public image; as they reached out to the community school concept; as the community school program has provided a focal point for the community. The community school program is in direct competition with community recreation for the public dollar available for community activities.*

"In the face of declining school populations, some educators see community education as a means to justify the status quo. They see the opportunity in leisure to expand their domain," explains Sondra Kirsch, a former county recreation director who nevertheless doesn't see community education as a threat to existing agencies.

This type of sudden reversal of form concerning door opening by school administrators rankles many people who have been attempting to use schools for some time unsuccessfully. A YMCA director put it to me this way. "For years our local YMCA has asked for the use of the schools for

club meetings and organized sports, and for years we were told the schools could not be used for this. When the school board adopted the community school concept, we were told the schools would open to our use. Instead, the community schools opened their own programs which were identical to and in direct competition to ours. I supported community education, even went before the school board to get it installed. Now I can tell you I am unalterably opposed to it."

Stories of this type spread rapidly and there are enough of them going around to begin to worry supporters of the movement. For the movement which fostered coordination and cooperation to be accused of creating competition and duplication is a serious charge indeed.

Considering the growth during the past few years, the incidence of abuse is small. It probably is no more significant than the number of recreation and community agency personnel actively sabotaging and undercutting community education for selfish reasons. But self-serving has no place in the true community education philosophy and self-serving and empire building under the guise of community education is even less acceptable than self-serving under any other label.

In most communities community education is working and working well. It is working because the concept is sound, the public is demanding it, and the professionals on both sides have adopted a positive attitude of putting community first.

Gordon Sprague, Chief of Recreation and Parks in Jacksonville, Florida, echoes the sentiments of many of his colleagues when he says, "If we were financially independent, had adequate staff and facilities, I would enjoy being independent from concert efforts; but recreation relates to education, so we have taken a positive leadership role in maximizing resources available."

This relationship between education and recreation is becoming increasingly indefinable as the recreation profession re-evaluates its own basic concept and definition.

Education is a much defined word, but I like the definition of Bob Frossard, former University of Virginia Community Education Center Director: "Education is anything in which knowledge produces positive change in a person."

Frossard's definition of education is as broad as this definition of recreation offered at a recent conference: "In the emerging view it is not activities, or facilities, or programs that are central; it is what happens to people. Recreation is not a specific event, a position in time, or a place in space, it is a dimension in life; it is a state of being."

That definition is rapidly gaining acceptance in the leisure services field. Recreation Director Jody Millward, of Kingman, Arizona, recently wrote in a community education class schedule:

> *It is not the activities themselves or the filling of the leisure hours that is our ultimate goal. The filling of leisure hours with activities lends itself to the traditional concept of recreation, but we need to address ourselves to the emerging concept of recreation which is to provide the individual with opportunities and activities that allow him to find and explore his own range of abilities to have new and varied experiences in an environment wherein he can experience success, and to come away from a program or experience with a renewed and amplified feeling that he is a worthy, adequate human being.*

This emerging concept of recreation is hard for some traditionalists in the field to accept. It is even less understood by some school officials, who don't recognize the recreation professional unless he has a whistle in his mouth and is dribbling a basketball down the hallway. Yet this knowledge is essential to the education official who truly wishes to see the value of recreation and the relationship between education and recreation.

"The community school usually lists 'recreation' as a 'course' or as in an adjunct to physical education. This insults the community recreation service professional who sees recreation as any experience which contributes to self-fulfillment," warns Henry Swan.

Two common things emerge from all conversations. First, *no one* disagrees with the basic

concept of community schools, that is, that school facilities should be used by the community. Second, a person's view of community education is biased by their personal experience with the concept in practice–some good, some bad, and some non-committal. All of which brings us to our second question, "When community education arrives, will it be as advertised?"

The "advertisements," ranging from the epic film "To Touch a Child" to modern sophisticated multi-media presentations and the annual pilgrimage to Flint, promise coordination of services, community involvement in determining needs, and most of all, extended use of the multi-million dollar school building and grounds complex. To a tax weary populace, tired of tales of duplication, bureaucracy, and governmental waste, the plan sounds like an answer to a prayer.

But taxpayers aren't the only ones praying. Faced with declining school populations and a citizenry who will no longer give them a blank check, harried school administrators are grasping for programs to improve their image and regain public support.

Public recreation agencies are fighting for the same tough dollar and are jealously guarding their own areas of concern, and private agencies, not endowed with public funds, are fighting for their lives. Out of this life and death struggle, somehow harmony and cooperation are supposed to reign supreme.

Perhaps the biggest flaw in the actual product as contrasted to the advertised product is the lack of citizen involvement. Notable exceptions can be found (such as in Baltimore County, Maryland), but by and large, today's community education programs are products of professionals and agencies, not communities. The principal or the coordinator, or the school board, or the park district always have the final say, and the commitment to true involvement is more often than not a function of the lips and not of the heart.

I remember clearly my first visit to Flint, and the unbelievable impression that program left upon me. Not until I returned home to Danville did I realize that not once in the three day period had I heard an advisory committee discussed in depth or seen the result of a strong community involvement *before* programming. I am becoming more and more convinced that community education cannot fulfill its true purpose until it is taken out of the hands of professionals and put in the hands of the people in the community. *They* will not allow the petty overlapping and jealousies to continue. It is interesting to note that most of the resentments now felt by established community organizations are not directed toward the concept or the community, but toward the professionals operating the program.

Henry Swan summarizes the present situation, "All the ingredients for a really great fight are present in this potential conflict between community school and community recreation. This fight must *NEVER* materialize. It will not if the professionals in both camps face the facts objectively, squarely, forcefully, and immediately."

Fortunately, there are professionals in both camps who will meet this challenge squarely and forcefully.

"The idea that a vigorous and effective municipal parks and recreation department is threatened by a community school is nonsense," flatly states Ken Smithee, past President of the American Recreation and Park Society. "The job of providing for the public's leisure needs is so vast that no one agency can expect to do it alone. Accordingly, there is a place for municipal park and recreation departments, county departments, schools, private and non-profit recreation agencies, and many others in meeting the recreational needs of any given locality. Cooperation and consultation–not competition–among agencies are the answer. The professionals, who spend time in a community competing with and downgrading each other, are being counter-productive–and they, their organizations and the public will ultimately be the losers in such an undesirable and needless situation."

The community education movement's continuing success will not depend upon its acceptability as a concept, for that is well established. It will depend upon the people who espouse it, and operate it, and cooperate with it. Those people will make it work or fail, and the concept itself will have minimal effect on its fate. But, if the professionals truly understand the concept, they should not feel threatened. The understanding of that concept lies in the name. The key word is community. It does not refer to who is doing the serving, but who is being served.

I no longer think the community school concept can survive and prosper simply because it is right, logical and makes sense. But it will survive and it will prosper, in spite of its problems, because the majority of agencies and their staff will overcome the threat and seize the opportunity to serve the community.

Community Education and the Deaf Community

by William J. McClure
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Introduction

The rapid expansion of the community education concept in the past ten or fifteen years has made it possible for more and more people in different walks of life to improve their knowledge, their skills, and their opportunities for greater economic security and to develop their potential in many areas. But there is one group to which these opportunities have been provided in only a limited way or in only isolated instances and that group is the deaf segment of our population. Unfortunately, community education programs have failed to meet the needs of the deaf population in a great majority of the areas where these programs exist largely because there is little understanding of the needs of deaf persons within communities. Conversely deaf adults often have little knowledge of the availability of community education programs and/or ways in which they can participate. Often the deaf persons do not read the paper or frequent those places where notices of community education appear nor are they aggressive enough to go out and locate these programs on their own. They needed to be reached through and by organizations of and for the deaf.

Their numbers are few but there are deaf persons in all parts of our country. They are often unidentified because of the invisibile nature of the handicap and because the communication barriers imposed by the handicap often lead deaf persons to seek recreation and social life among their own peers and apart from their work associates. The communication barrier, the constraints on education imposed by a hearing impairment, plus the restrictive communication modes in vogue until the comparatively recent advent of the "total communication" philosophy have had a detrimental effect on many deaf persons. The result had been a large number of deaf adults who have completed elementary and possibly secondary educational programs with a minimal command of language and minimal exposure to the wide variety of cultural opportunities and occupational skills now available through community education programs.

Securing Support

In most states, the large residential schools for the deaf are the repositories of expertise in the area of deafness. These schools are look to for information and leadership by the great majority of deaf adults in the various states. At the same time these large residential schools have felt primary responsibility for their on-campus programs at the elementary and secondary levels, a responsibility

for developing acceptible habits, morals, standards, recreational pursuits and interscholastic and intramural athletics. There has been little time, inadequate staffing and no funding to become involved with their alumni, nor with other portions of the deaf population and their unmet needs. The establishment of the Community Education Center at Gallaudet College, Washington, D. C., has caused many large schools for the deaf to re-examine their feelings of responsibility toward the deaf adult. In some states where residential schools have felt some vague stirring of conscience or responsibility toward the total deaf population group there has been reluctance on the part of State Departments of Education to supply funds which would enable these residential schools to extend services to the adult deaf population. But in some instances with financial support from Gallaudet, these schools have secured additional funds from their State Departments of Education to begin programs to involve the deaf adult in the community education process.

Recently, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind has moved into this area with assistance from the Gallaudet College Center for Community Education, and the Center for Community Education at the University of Florida in Gainesville. After obtaining an initial grant from the Center for Community Education at Gallaudet, the Florida School requested matching funds from the Florida Department of Education to further the program.

The first request for matching funds from the state was turned down and we were informed we were ineligible to participate in statewide community education programs. Florida law provides that local school boards which wish to do so can set up community education programs in the district (the area of the county) served by that district and its board. Community colleges which wish to do so can set up off-campus programs within the area served by the particular community college. The same is true of the universities' and continuing education's off-campus programs, which they wish to establish. The assumption regarding the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind was that because it was located in St. Augustine, St. Johns County, it could only become involved in community education programs in that area and the adult deaf population in the area was, of course, very small. Several other governmental departments and/or agencies concurred in this view.

The Florida School attempted to correct the misconception concerning its participation in the community education program. It was pointed out that the school did not intend to establish a program nor to provide facilities in any other area of the state. The purpose was for the school to serve as a facilitator in bringing together all members of the deaf community and community education personnel in the various areas of the state. The school emphasized the fact that the deaf and persons associated with the deaf throughout the state need the opportunity to participate in community education programs especially in those areas and activities which were of interest and concern to them. It was pointed out that since FSDB was established, the deaf of Florida have looked to the school for leadership. The school was more in touch with them than any other existing agency and it seemed only logical that such programs would be the responsibility of the school. These arguements fell on deaf ears.

Subsequently, it was pointed out to an influential member of the legislature, a representative from the area where the school is located, that the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and its board by law serve the entire State of Florida. Students enrolled come from almost every county in the state and certainly from every section. If the school were to be given funds for a community education program, it would seem only logical to serve the adult deaf persons residing in those same areas from which regular students are enrolled–the entire State of Florida. Again, it was pointed out that the irony of the whole situation was that the school did not contemplate the actual establishment of programs from the school or by school personnel. The school merely wanted to bring together deaf persons throughout the state with those responsible for community

education programs in the many areas. Thus, these deaf persons would be informed of the opportunities that are theirs and the persons directing the programs would be informed of the needs of deaf persons and/or those associated with them. As a result of this final appeal, the State Attorney General related an opinion that the Florida School was eligible for a community education grant and eligible to serve deaf adults throughout the state.

It probably helped the position of the school, when the 1975 legislature approved a bill submitted by the same St. Johns County representative, specifically naming FSDB in separate sections of the Community Education Act. The italicized words were added amending the bill as follows: under the section on the purpose of the bill "to provide state leadership and financial support by encouraging and assisting local school districts, the *Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind*, and other local governmental agencies in the establishment of Community Schools." Section 4 was also amended to read "Community School Program–pursuant to policies and regulations to be adopted by the State Board of Education, each school board and the Board of Trustees for the *Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind* may submit to the Department a request for a Community School Grant."

Moving Towards Community Education

Early contacts with the coordinators of community education in various counties throughout the state emphasized the need for an orientation program to acquaint coordinators with the needs of the deaf persons in their communities. Conversely, the contacts also pointed out the lack of information existing within the deaf community concerning the community education program, the services it offered and ways that the deaf community could call to the attention of the proper people their interest in and need for many of the services already being supplied to hearing people.

When the FSDB school appointed a Community Education Coordinator in the fall of 1975, the initial responsibilities of the position were delineated as follows:

1. Program, with the assistance of the school administration, all community activities relating to the school.
2. Promote, publicize, and interpret existing and planned programs to the school and the community.
3. Accept responsibility for all activities of the school normally designed as community related.
4. Establish rapport with leaders of the community (business, religious, and social).
5. Maintain contact with the parents of the FSDB students and the FSDB alumni.
6. Establish community advisory councils in some areas for the purpose of community education program development and evaluation.
7. Assist in a constant evaluation of activities for the purpose of upgrading existing programs and implementing new ideas.
8. Assist in establishing summer enrichments and/or programs for the FSDB students in their home communities.
9. Assist community educators in other communities to make existing courses available to deaf people who are interested.
10. Perform such other related duties and responsibilities as assigned by the school principal.

The program at the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind is now in its second year of operation and has met with success in a number of areas. The program is expanding and is developing an awareness in communities–awareness both on the part of hearing persons and deaf persons. At present the following objectives are being realized in an increasing number of areas and ways:

1. The development of liaison between the FSDB school and communities in the State of Florida.
2. Contacts with the parents of FSDB students.
3. Contact with alumni of the FSDB school.
4. The establishment of good public relations with the local community and other communities in the State of Florida through the use of appropriate media.
5. An awareness of developments in community education in other schools for the deaf as well as in public schools, and the implementation of new development activities within the community education program.
6. Encouragement and maintenance of contacts with other organizations which have an interest in serving the deaf population in community education projects.
7. Provision of opportunities for deaf students from FSDB to become involved in and take advantage of community education programs which exist in the home community during the summer months when the student is at home for vacation.
8. Opportunities for hearing residents of St. Johns County to take advantage of the proposed community education programs offered through FSDB.

Conclusion

A number of deaf leaders within the state and deaf persons themselves have been involved with preplanning committees in preparing statewide position papers for the upcoming White House Conference. In the deliberations of these committees, the deaf members and those associated with them have become well acquainted with the terms "accessible environment, transportation barriers, architectural barriers and similar terms so meaningful to the orthopedically handicapped and those associated with them. In the December 1976 issue of the *Deaf American*, the publication of the National Association of the Deaf, Dr. Boyce R. Williams, Director of the Deafness and Communication Disorders' office, Rehabilitation Services Administration has compared the above terms with "the complex and extensive communication barriers confronting deaf people." Dr. Williams goes on to say that to his knowledge there has been no effective legislation, public education nor implementation work carried on to reduce these communication barriers. Reduction of these barriers is a pervasive need to improve the daily living experience of all deaf people.

Educators of the deaf were well aware that there is often an invisible wall between the school and the community. The concept of community education gives deaf schools the opportunity to do something to bridge the isolation experienced by deaf people and to remove the "invisible wall." Community education attempts to build a "draw bridge" between the community and the school so that school people, community people and deaf people can work and solve many problems together. The school acts as a catalyst in bringing together community resources to meet the identified needs of the deaf community and the deaf individual. The initiation of community education programs at the Florida School and in other schools throughout the country is aiding in reducing the communication barriers which exist between the deaf community and the rest of the community in which they reside. Reduction of the communication barriers is enabling deaf persons to participate more fully in the opportunities available to others in the community and at the same time assume greater responsibilities in citizenship and service.

Contrasting Perceptions

by Larry E. Decker
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The constancy of change along with diverse crises, constraints, and challenges has affected everyone's existence in organizational and institutional life in America. As a result, people are beginning to give greater consideration in their personal and professional lives to the dynamic *whole* instead of trying to address only a portion of their problems. The American political, social, economic, cultural, and educational scenes, filtered through experiences, have a direct effect upon people's perceptions of problems and opportunties.

An Evolving Philosophy

Community education is a multifaceted and dynamic philosophy. Although advocated with increased understanding and commitment by educational, governmental, business, and community leaders, the philosophy evokes diverse and sometimes contrasting perceptions. Some people belive that the concept of community education will become synonymous with good educational practices, whereas others hope the excitement that the concept is currently generating will be the passing fancy of a few advocates and will go the way of many promising educational practices of the past.

For others, the concept is a new perception of the potential of education which challenges public education to revitalize its role and to assist in the coordination of interdependent, community-based resources and learning experiences that meet the needs of individuals, families, and communities. For still others, community education is an old idea of returning to the "Little Red School House," which served as the common meeting ground for all community residents and related interest groups. And, then, there are some who feel it is a movement to "open up" school facilities and is synonymous with after-school and extended-day programs, adult education or recreation.

Equally diverse are the glowing as well as deflating statements which abound in the writings and discussions of lay and professional people as they examine the varied purposes of community education. For example:

- Community education has the greatest potential of any educational movement on the forefront today.
- Community education is nothing new—we already have it.
- Community education is an idea whose time has come!
- Schools are already asked or demanded to do too much. So why even think of community education: we cannot afford to pay for it!

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[1]Sections used with permission of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, *NASSP Bulletin*, Vol. 59, No. 394, Nov. 1975.

- Social, political, economic, and educational considerations make community education an absolute mandate for the future.
- There's no research or proof that community education made a difference. Its accountability criteria for performance assessment are not defined in measurable objectives.

Potential Benefits

The possible benefits to a community of a well-designed and carefully implemented community education program are numerous. People involved in the movement claim that community education can provide programs which will satisfy the needs and interests of all community members, will help to build a stronger sense of community, and will serve as the catalytic process for building a better way of life in the community. In its final report, the U. S. Senate Subcommittee investigating Juvenile Delinquency recommended community education as one of nine major strategies to address the problems related to school violence and vandalism.[2] Other claims for community education include:

- Community education can improve the public attitude toward general education services.
- Community education increases the chances of favorable passage of bond issues and referendum features in support of public schools.
- Community education programs improve the average K-12 attendance.
- Community education is directly related to improved academic achievement.
- Community education programs aid in the reduction of vandalism and other school-community problems.
- Community education increases school, agency and organization coordination and cooperation which helps avoid costly duplication of services.[3]

Although the potential of community education is great, it is disconcerting to note that there is little hard evidence to indicate whether or not its benefits are being received. Adopting the community education philosophy does not automatically assure the receipt of these benefits. The assessment of the Office of Community Education Research at the University of Michigan is that to date, community education, as a practice, is far from community education as a concept. In practice, the majority of community education programs have not developed much beyond planned physical activity, formal adult education and hobby classes. Although presenting this sobering finding, the research does show encouraging indications that "community education has promise; especially if we are able to learn from our research."[4]

Consequences of Varying Perceptions

As reflected in the preceding sections, varying opinions have led to different components being emphasized and consequently to variations in implementing the concept. Many of the variations exist because administrators and policy makers do not perceive the concept in its totality. Lack of conceptual clarity has often resulted in fragmentation in efforts to implement it.

There is almost no public school system or individual elementary or secondary school in the country that cannot cite individual program examples that are comparable to activities, programs or processes advocated by community educators. As of June 1976, however, only 5.3% of all

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[2]Birch Bayh, Chairman *Final Report on the Nature and Prevention of School Violence and Vandalism*, U. S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, U. S. Government Printing Office, 79-297, February 1977.

[3]Larry E. Decker, *People Helping People: An Overview of Community Education*, Pendell Publishing Co., October 1976, p. 16.

[4]Van Voorhees, Cwik and King, "Community Education Has Promise," *NASSP Bulletin*, November 1975, p. 59.

elementary and secondary public school buildings (5,083 out of 95,000) and 7.2 percent of all public school systems (1,200 out of 16,500) were identified as being involved in a planned and organized effort of implementing a comprehensive program for community education development.[5]

Fragmented community education efforts can produce, or can increase, conflicts and conceptual differences among school administrators, teachers, community colleges, adult educators, recreation and park personnel, social services staffs, and numerous others. If a community is to embrace the philosophy and implement community education to its fullest potential, conceptual clarification is an essential first step.

Conclusion

Community education's proponents do not promise that it will solve all the problems of education or the many and complex situations arising from the American social, political, and economic scene. They believe, however, that community education can make a difference if people perceive the concept in its totality and modify existing educational organizations' structures to accommodate these new dimensions and directions.

Implementing the philosophy is not without difficulties. Stephen Crane's poem effectively expresses the dilemma which frequently challenges those trying to implement community education.

> When the prophet, a complacent, fat man,
> Arrived at the mountain top,
> He cried: Woe to my knowledge!
> I intended to see good white lands
> And bad black lands,
> But the scene is grey.[6]

Clarity of conceptualization is a must in implementing community education. Conceptual clarity provides the sense of direction that is essential if community education is to fulfill its potential.

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[5]C. S. Mott Foundation Annual Report, data from 15 regional Community Education Centers, June 1976.
[6]Stephen Crane, *The Collected Poems of Stephen Crane* (New York: Alfred A. Knop, 1930), p. 102.